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RAMBLES IN THE NORTH YORKSHIRE DALES

BY

J. E. BUCKROSE

AUTHOR OF
"DOWN OUR STREET" "LOVE IN A LITTLE TOWN" ETC.

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PREFACE

In writing this short account of the North Yorkshire Dales I have consulted so many authorities, from Old Leland and Drunken Barnaby downwards, that I find it impossible to mention each by name. I should like, therefore, to acknowledge my great indebtedness to all those ramblers who have gone this way before me, and to whose carefully garnered information I owe so much.

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RAMBLES IN THE NORTH YORKSHIRE DALES

CHAPTER I

A WORD FOR THOSE WHO CANNOT GO

Most people nowadays are ready to spend a great deal of money and to be exceedingly sea-sick in search of wonder and beauty. This is, of course, greatly to their credit. But they do not perhaps realise that anybody in England who possesses the means for a moderate holiday, a good pair of boots, and an imagination, can find that most exquisite end of all journeying at a distance of 237 miles from London town.

This book is necessarily written first of all for those who have time, means, boots,

and possibly motor-cars, but my near and secret hope is that I may perhaps reach some who must stay behind — who come home jaded after the long day's work, and must be at work again next morning.

To those—if I had the power to make things real enough—I would say, shut your eyes for a moment and we will make believe. Then, in a minute, the smoke and bustle and drudgery would lie far behind us: we should open the eyes of our mind in the Yorkshire Dales, and a keen air blowing across wide clear spaces would sing out to our jaded souls, "Go in and win! Go in and win!"

For that is the message of the Dales, just as Italy says, "Dream beloved," and Egypt, "Be tranquil, none can conquer Fate."

What to Take

Well, the quickest and easiest route to the Yorkshire Dales is, of course, to glide like that, down the swift path of the imagination;

but even if I had the power I long for, I could never put into a book the air of a Yorkshire morning, though I might try to write its insistent song of hope and courage. No one can describe the extraordinary tonic and refreshing property of the climate. I, myself, went last year, feeling that life was really almost too difficult, the world almost too complicated a place to live in, and the future of us all a dim problem, half-guessed, which it were better to leave in obscurity.

And—it is a plain truth—I came home with three ruined hats, an enormous appetite, and a certain knowledge that—

> "God's in His heaven—
> All's right with the world!"

The ruined hats were accounted for by the fact that it was the rainiest season on record, even in the Dales, where you must sometimes expect "soft weather," and go prepared with a mackintosh and a very short skirt, if you are a lady.

A thermos flask and a good map are a great help if you take long walks, though

of course it is both possible and easy to motor to all the principal places of interest; but even so, you may sometimes wish to go off the beaten track and find out those spots where a tourist can still wander, even in crowded England, without coming across a likely spot for refreshment.

But—it seems really impolite to say such a thing—the first essential in packing for the Yorkshire Dales is to remember your mind. So many people, incredible as it seems, pack up everything else down to insect powder and bandages for possible sprains, and leave their mind behind grubbing about among papers at the office or with the maids in the kitchen at home.

There is an old jingle somewhere which says—

> "Life becomes a holiday,
> When the heart goes out of town."

And in a trip to the Yorkshire Dales, above all other places perhaps, it is necessary to see that your mind goes out of town with your body, if you are to get the full good of your holiday.

There at Last

But if you have remembered this, you will alight from the train at Richmond, perhaps at sunset, and you will go straight from the strain and hurry of modern existence into that period of romance when people took short views of life and such wonderful long views of everything else.

You will have reached, at the end of a few hours' journey, a beautiful country where every old woman sees wonders every day. She spills the salt and casts a pinch of it over her shoulder with the shadow of Destiny falling across the stone hearth. She breaks a mirror and Misfortune hovers almost visible about the cottage door. She hears a cock crow at dead of night and wonders who has passed away.

She dwells on the edge of the invisible, as we must do, for awhile, if we would understand the spirit of the Yorkshire Dales.

And so we walk down the street from the station to our inn, and as the curfew tolls

over Richmond town with the wonderful castle behind it, we seem ourselves to be slipping back—back—into a golden time that never was, where romantic mediævalism and modern drainage existed together.

We are not at all surprised to find that hatred of the Norman invader of nearly a thousand years ago still lingers in a local song, because we, too, feel a little stirring of indignation as we repeat the ancient doggerel—

"Each came out of Brittany,
With his wife Tiffany,
And his maid Manfras
And his dog Hardigras."

The last straw of humiliation, we feel, was that unpleasant hound Hardigras.

And as we stand still in the street, listening to the bell which has rung on through such tremendous changes, I feel inclined to whisper to my companion, with a fearful glance into the shadowy archways—

"It is a shameful thing to make us put out our lights."

I *know*, of course, that Norman William has been dust for nearly a thousand years—I *know* that I can sit up consuming the hotel lights until morning—but—that is how you feel at Richmond!

Richmond as a Centre

It is very usual to begin a tour of the three sister dales of Wensleydale, Swaledale, and Teesdale, by taking Leyburn in Wensleydale as a first centre, going thence by road to Richmond. And this is as good a way as another. The fact being that the distances are not great, and it is easy for a tourist to arrange his own route according to his inclination when he once knows the situation of the various places of interest.

But Richmond is to a certain extent the natural centre of the three dales, and so I have made it the subject of my first chapter.

The capitals of the three dales are at the following distances from Richmond: Reeth

in Swaledale, 10 miles; Leyburn in Wensleydale, 10 miles; Barnard Castle in Teesdale, 16 miles.

When seen from the hills on the outside of the town, Richmond would appear to be situated in a hollow, but it really stands six hundred (600) feet above sea-level, and as it covers a very large area for the size of the place, it should be altogether an unusually healthy town.

It is difficult to imagine a more romantic and beautiful view than that of the ancient Castle of Richmond, standing above the still more ancient town, with the bridge and the river below, and the rose-grown churchyard, a most exquisite garden of sleep, upon the slope of the hill. I have seen a great many ways of beautifying the resting-places of the dead in all parts of the world, but I do not think I ever saw any which appealed to me so strongly as that vivid green slope above the river with its thousands of roses. The planting and care of them is a labour of love on the part of the custodian of the Parish Church of St. Mary's, who can give

a great deal of valuable and interesting information about the church itself.

St. Mary's Church, Richmond

The date of the foundation of this church is not known, but from an excellent small guide published by Messrs. C. E. Cookes & Son of Richmond I find that it was probably restored at different times by the Earls of Richmond, for in 1825 very few of the pillars or windows were alike, the roofs of both chancel and nave were flat, and the whole building was in a very unsafe condition.

In 1859, however, it was restored by the ubiquitous Sir Gilbert Scott, who presents to the inquiring mind the same problem as Queen Elizabeth. How he ever restored so many churches—and how she ever, in those days of difficult locomotion, slept in so many strange beds—will always remain among the great host of unanswered questions.

A few portions of the old Norman church have been preserved, and the tracery in the

Perpendicular windows of the north aisle, the chancel, and the south aisle remain unaltered.

The screen and stalls of carved wood were taken from Easby Abbey at the time of the Dissolution. There is a scroll on the top which bears an inscription in Latin pointing out to the monks the special dangers of their calling, and the seats are ornamented with some very curious carvings which have a grotesque comedy about them which appeals strongly to some imaginations.

The tremendously human person who carved the piping pig on the seat of a stall must have had a sense of pure, irresponsible fun that overrode everything—and you cannot help, as you look, giving a sort of greeting across the years to a jolly brother long asleep.

In the registers of the church there are some very interesting and curious entries, which those who have time will find well worth studying, as they bring home with startling vividness the atmosphere of bygone Richmond.

Richmond Castle

This castle, with its noble keep 100 feet high, rises bold and splendid above the river Swale, and commands a magnificent view over the valley of Richmondshire. It is so strongly built that it has endured for nine centuries, and seems likely to endure for many more, and the building was begun by Alan Rufus, the nephew of William I., soon after he received the lands of the Saxon Earl Edwyn from the Conqueror.

It will be understood what conquest meant in the eleventh century when we realise that the estate confiscated from Earl Edwyn consisted of 440 manors, 104 parishes, and 140 knights' fees of 640 acres each. And as we stand near a ruined window and think of the Fitzhughs and Marmions, Randolph de Granville and William the Lion, of Nevilles and Scropes, and of Lennox—the natural son of Charles II.—to whom the dukedom of Richmond was finally given, we see passing along between us and the wild sky a pageant

of England. Something gone by which historians tell us will repeat itself far on in the ages — but never the same — for the historians are wrong; history never does repeat itself. The essential trifles are all quite different.

A few years ago the spot used to be pointed out upon which George IV. sat, as he does in the famous print, and declared the view from Richmond Castle to be the finest prospect in England.

One wonders what the ghost of the grim William thought of the first gentleman in Europe; and, with imagination run riot, it would be possible to reconstruct a very interesting conversation between these two rulers of England.

The town itself was built by Earl Conan about seventy-five years after the bastions of Alan the Red; and the stairway from the ground to the first floor is of modern construction. Originally there was no communication between the two storeys, and the lowest chamber is dark and vaulted, with the rings still remaining to which the lamps

were hung. There is a well beneath the rock floor which supplied good water up to quite recent times.

The view from the summit is of great variety and extent—a wide sweep of hills and woods, the winding dale, and beyond, the brown heights which stretch away to the mountains. Then, near at hand, is the town with all its picturesque charm; the towers of St. Mary's and of the Old Grey Friars' Monastery, and Trinity Chapel in the market-place. Then, following the course of the river, you can see the ruins of the Abbey of St. Agatha, at Easby, and a few miles farther is Catterick, a settlement of the Romans, and Bolton on Swale, the birthplace of old Jenkins who died in 1670, and who left many interesting particulars of past rural conditions.

The castle itself figures very little in the actual history of the country, and was never besieged, which is all the more curious as it is one of the best fortified castles in Yorkshire, and placed in a position which at that time must have rendered it almost impregnable.

But if there is not much of actual history connected with the castle, there is a legend which would have made the fortune of any fortress on the Rhine, and which seizes the imagination all the more, perhaps, because it has not yet become one of the commonplaces of general knowledge, like the story of the Lorelei with her insistent back hair.

The Legend of Richmond Castle

It is well known that King Arthur and his Knights lie sleeping in a cave at the base of the great rock on which the castle stands, and many a boy has spent long summer afternoons by the river's edge trying to find the forgotten entrance, and to see the sleeping Knights, but he has had to come home again without having found anything more tangible than that splendid thrill of strange adventure which you can only know when you have not yet put bounds to the wonder of life.

So, of course, it follows that the only man who ever did find the secret passage was one

who had never grown up. His neighbours called him a ne'er-do-weel, and his wife had that contempt for him which a good woman alone can feel for a husband who is not exactly like everybody else.

One day they chanced to quarrel more bitterly than usual, so Potter Thompson went out to wander round the base of the rock because the beauty of the castle and the river, and the sound of the birds, and the wind among the bluebells, all comforted his teased and jaded spirit. If you had told him this, however, he would have regarded you as a lunatic and requested you with some abruptness to quit his company; for he would have thought you meant to insult him. It was the sort of thing his wife did hurl at him when she was angry. And he was quite aware—a working man of that time in remote Yorkshire—that the mechanic who looked for comfort in birds and trees and flowers would be regarded as a fool.

He went out to get away from his wife's tongue—as many a man has done before and since.

That was what he thought about, and as he glanced drearily at an opening in the castle-rock which he did not remember having noticed before, something stirred within him. He forgot the remarks his wife had made about his moral character and personal appearance. Could this—could this be the opening to the vault beneath the castle? He crept in on his hands and knees, and found after a few yards that he could stand upright; then he suddenly forgot he had a wife at all. He was a boy again, with no bounds set to the wonder of things, as he looked up at the faint light on the walls of the rock passage.

"Theer'll be a crack i' t'owd rock," he said to himself.

The light grew steadier, and he thought he might be reaching a guard-room of the castle by some forgotten passage; then, suddenly, he turned a sharp corner and stood at the entrance of a lofty cavern that stretched away into deep shadows of which no one could see the end.

The heart of Potter Thompson went into

his boots, and yet he was filled with a strange exultation.

He dared not look round for a moment, then he was more afraid not to look, and now at last he allowed his glance to rest on a very old lamp hanging from the roof in the centre of the cave. The light shone down on a stone table upon which lay a gigantic sword such as Potter Thompson had never seen before, and a great horn of gold and ivory. And there, on the floor of the cavern, growing plain as Potter Thompson became used to the rich gloom, were tall knights in armour, fast asleep. And each one had a crown of gold upon his helmet.

So Potter Thompson goggled at them, greatly afraid; for he knew he looked upon the great King Arthur and his Knights, who have never died, but, as every Dalesman knows, are only waiting the hour when England calls for them.

It was a sight to make a man hold his breath and worship, and then go out to die for England.

But—alas for Potter Thompson—the gold on the sword and the ivory horn made him think of the score at the public-house, about which he and his wife had quarrelled, so, with glistening eyes, he seized on the heavy sword and the horn, and stumbled with them towards the gloomy passage.

Then, suddenly, the great vault echoed to the clash of steel, and the armoured knights stirred in their long sleep, and Potter Thompson flung down the sword and the horn and ran away.

But, as he ran, a loud voice called after him through the shadows—

> "Potter! Potter Thompson!
> If thou hadst either drawn
> The sword, or blown the horn,
> Thou'dst been the luckiest man
> That ever yet was born!"

Since that time King Arthur and his Knights have slept undisturbed in the cave beneath Richmond Castle, but if, after seeing it, you care to take the pleasant walk by the water's edge, perhaps *you* may find the secret passage. Who knows?

Anyway, it is worth trying.

F. Frith & Co.]

HOLY TRINITY CHURCH, RICHMOND.

Holy Trinity Church

The only remarkable thing about this church is that there exists, so far as I know, none other like it. But though the ancient edifice itself is in no way especially beautiful, the fact that a variety of businesses are carried on under the sacred roof renders it an object of amazed interest.

The periods at which the north aisle was cut off from the nave, the south aisle disappeared, or the shops were received into the bosom of the church, all remain uncertain; but it is considered probable that Holy Trinity had ceased to be used for public worship long before the Reformation.

And no doubt that barber of Richmond who, in the year 1755, leased the shop under the steeple, together with the double-storied houses on the west side, and a piece of waste land, late the south aisle, *at a yearly rental of sixpence*, was a very grateful son of the Established Church.

The tower of Holy Trinity contains two

bells, and it may still be regarded as the shepherd of Richmond, in spite of the intrusion of trade into its precincts; for one bell rouses people from their beds at six in the morning with a solemn call—"Rise! Rise! While-man-lives-man-must-work-soon-he-dies—Come! Come!"

Then at eight o'clock at night the curfew rings to call the labourers in, more solemn still—

"Rest! Rest! While-man-lives-he-must-sleep-sleep-is-best—Come! Come!"

And when any parishioner sleeps for the last time twelve strokes are rung, and after that the passing bell: nine for a man, six for a woman, three for a child.

So, serious-eyed, the people of Richmond look out of their houses, and count the heavy strokes, and wonder who has gone away to-day.

And a few days later another tolling is heard—the Gathering-Bell—which calls the neighbours together who wish to follow the departed one to the grave.

But the smaller bell in the tower seems to

be dedicated to less solemn uses, and it is rung when a fire takes place, or the Sessions are held, and, most cheerful purpose of all, at eleven o'clock on Shrove Tuesday, to bid the "housewives tend the fires to cook the pancakes well."

So there can be no doubt that the bells of Holy Trinity as they ring out over Richmond do touch some of the great realities of life—work, death, and good feeding.

Grey Friars' Tower

This is situated on the north of the town, and is said to have been founded by Ralph Fitz Randal, Lord of Middleham, in 1258, and his heart was buried here while his bones were interred at Coverham. But the Scrope and Grosvenor Controversy of 1389 proves that Lord Richard Scrope was also one of the founders.

The central tower is very beautiful, in the Perpendicular style, and it alone remains of all the great mass of buildings erected by the Franciscan friars.

The community depended for a livelihood upon the charity of the faithful, so they became, naturally, adepts in the art of begging, and probably were like the friar of Chaucer who was "a wantoun and a merrye," and withal "the beste beggar in his hous." They were wise men, those old friars, and knew that a jest opens the heart and a good laugh keeps it open.

But they fell on evil times at the Dissolution, and many suffered death for refusing to take the oath of supremacy. And now all that remains of their foundation of Grey Friars is the exquisite tower which adds such distinction and beauty to the general view of the town.

Many of the other glories of ancient Richmond have departed also, but enough remains to take the visitor back into the old romantic days, when men had not learned to love wisely, believed in lots of things they could not see, and were still ready to die for an idea.

Any ramblers who have been interested in these extracts from the romantic history

of Richmond, and desire to find out more for themselves, should go for help to Mr. Cook of High Row—a bookseller of the old sort who sells books because he loves them, and who possesses a wealth of valuable information which he is ready to share with all those who really care for historical research.

CHAPTER II

EASBY ABBEY

WITHIN an easy walk from the town is the Abbey of St. Agatha, called Easby Abbey. It is, perhaps, with the green meadows and fine elms, and the towers of Richmond in the background, one of the most beautifully situated ruins in England. The sound of the river can be heard in the distance, and you may wander as you will from one creeper-clad heap of masonry to another, tracing out the kitchen, refectory, oratory, and chapter-house.

If you linger at Easby while the sun goes down, watching the shadows darken behind the ruined walls, and the golden light stream through the blank windows, you will learn a little more than you knew before of the meaning of peace.

On the side which overlooks the river

F. Frith & Co.

EASBY ABBEY.

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the building shows signs of falling, but it is reported to have been in the same condition a century ago. The fireplace and chimney of the great kitchen are plainly to be recognised, and the refectory still possesses a fine window in which some beautiful tracery remains. The large room to the north of this is supposed to have been the chapter-house.

Any one sufficiently interested may trace the site of the Abbey Church by the clustered columns and by the walls and windows of the transepts. The abbot's lodgings were on the north side of the church, and were reached by a doorway in the north aisle. The Chantry Chapel of the Scropes was situated here, and the lattice-work of it has been removed to Wensley Church, where it may now be seen.

In a green field near, overlooking the Swale, is the famous Abbot's Elm, which no doubt stood there in the days when St. Agatha's Abbey was the burial-place of the great Yorkshire family, the Scropes, who were brought over hill and dale from their

castle in the heart of Wensleydale to take their last rest here.

St. Agatha's Church, Easby

If an Englishman desired to give a foreigner unacquainted with English rural landscape a perfect idea of an English country church, he could not do better than to take him to the little church of St. Agatha's at Easby. It is, as the oft-quoted Longstaffe has said, "a gem of rusticity." The arms of Scrope, Ash, and Conyers may be seen near the porch entrance, and many generations of village people have passed that way on a Sunday morning, to make their simple sacrifice of prayer and praise.

Those who are sensitive to such influences, or have any belief in them, will perhaps feel, too, as they enter, that here is an atmosphere created by men and women who were very sure of their God.

The architecture is plain, transitional Norman, and the east window contains an

early example of tracery, consisting of three lancet lights under one round arch.

In the north wall of the chancel may be seen a recess containing a stone coffin, possibly the tomb of the founder, though in some old churches these arched recesses were used for dramatic representations during Holy Week.

The frescoes which ornament the chancel were disclosed recently, and have been restored; they represent the Creation and Fall on the north, and on the south the life of Christ. These paintings are probably of the thirteenth century.

On the east wall of the south chapel is an inscription to the memory of "Dame Elizabeth Bowes," who "lived very comfortable, the wife" of the last English Ambassador to Scotland. It sounds more true and happy than most epitaphs, and adds a last touch of reality to our sense of the rustic charm of Easby Church.

A Legend of Easby and Richmond

Like so many of the old castles and houses in England, the castle at Richmond is sup-

posed to be connected with the Abbey of St. Agatha at Easby by a secret passage. And the hope of finding such a passage must have given the necessary thrill of high adventure to the lives of hundreds of Yorkshire boys. I know it from my youth, when I used to pass in another place a mound called Castle Hill; I could see right through the green turf every time, to a dim treasure house where gold and jewels and great wine goblets of tarnished silver all lay hidden together. I always meant to grow rich and dig up the Castle Hill—but I have never done it—perhaps because I never grew rich enough—perhaps because the eyes of my soul are no longer strong enough to see through a green hill to a treasure trove.

Anyway, there was once a drummer boy in Richmond town who was still young enough to know that nothing in the world is so splendidly real as romance, so one day he took his drum and crept through a narrow passage that goes down-stream in the direction of Easby Abbey. The soldiers were up above, following the sound, but it

grew fainter and fainter until it ceased, as any child in Richmond will tell you, upon a spot just outside the Grammar School.

Some people say if you listen very hard you can hear him beating it still, but I believe that the great King Arthur woke up for half an hour from his long sleep, and took the little lad by the hand, and led him into that wonderful country where all the tales of boyhood come really true.

CHAPTER III

SWALEDALE

If the town of Richmond and the neighbouring Abbey of Easby are rich in tradition and interest, the surrounding country is not less delightful to the traveller in search of something beautiful to look at, the while he drinks in that glorious air which will stimulate him through many working days to come.

It is perfectly easy to drive or motor as far as Reeth, and thus to gain a good idea of the charm and beauty of this part of the valley of the Swale. But the walks are so many and so various, that those who enjoy walking will find endless pleasure and interest in exploring the neighbourhood within reach of Richmond on foot.

The fact of the matter is, that, though it is possible to have a most delightful tour in the North Yorkshire Dales without walking

at all—still the Spirit of the Dales will not wait by the roadside to see your chariot go by. You can hardly expect it of a spirit, can you?

To find her, wild, fresh, elusive, you must walk along quiet places where your fellow-men have trudged through the centuries, seeing the glimmer of her green gown as she vanishes through the trees, and hearing her distant voice in the clear, cold sound of water rushing over stones.

Afterwards, when you get home, if you have been a true pilgrim, the clear sound will often come to refresh you at the end of a hard day's work, and the Spirit of the Dales will sing to you once more. Very likely she will give you a slap on the face as well, telling you to "buck up," for she is not a polite spirit, but you will begin to feel at once that the world is a big, fine place, and that the little niggardly things don't matter.

Willance's Leap

One delightful walk is towards the famous Willance's Leap through the Whitcliffe

Woods, and there is a most beautiful view of the Swale Valley from the scar at the summit of the high wood. The rambler will find here an abundance of rare moths and butterflies, as well as shrubs and flowers. Below the scar are some curious enclosures covering a large area, which were formerly supposed to be old sheep-pens, but they are altogether beyond the requirements of any recent civilisation, and most probably belong to a period before the Norman Conquest.

An authority named Mr. Clarkson, writing long ago, considers the rocks near here to have been remnants of the Great Deluge, which is to the credit of his Biblical knowledge and his imagination, but is unfortunately not true — or the neighbourhood of Richmond would be even more interesting than it is at present. The grand scarred surface is due to the slow process of denudation and to the grinding action of the ice during the glacial period.

In walking along the edge of this scar you come upon three stones and an obelisk which mark the exact spot of Willance's

Leap—a wonderful exploit of a hunter in the year 1606, which is confirmed in the local records. He was a man named Robert Willance, a successful lead-miner, who had an adventurous temperament, or he would, no doubt, have succeeded tamely to the draper's shop of his father, at Richmond, instead of allowing it to pass to his younger brother. He loved to ride about the wild dales, which must have been wild indeed in those days, and on one occasion when he was out a dense fog came on, through which he galloped unawares to the edge of a cliff 200 feet high. The horse sprang over the precipice with the rider still on its back, and the animal was killed, but the rider escaped with a broken leg.

Yorkshiremen are traditionally good riders, but Mr. Robert Willance does seem to have had a seat in the saddle which was worthy of a superman. You can, gazing upward at the wild scar, picture a race of us, as some people hope we may be, vaulting with equal splendour among the fastnesses of the Yorkshire Dales. Only it is to be hoped

that by then we shall have super-horses too.

In gratitude for his escape, Robert Willance erected these stones, 24 feet apart, and two of them are inscribed with the date, 1606, and the words, "Glory be to our merciful God who miraculously preserved me from the danger so great."

The view from the top of the scar includes the romantic little valley of Marske with the beautifully situated Hall and village. A short walk from here is the Beacon Hill, which also commands a very fine prospect, and it is said that on fine days you may see the Towers of York Minster, over 40 miles away.

On this beacon a fire was prepared for lighting at the time of the Armada, and it is difficult in these days of universal newspapers to realise the feelings of English men and women in these remote places when they saw one of these beacon fires flare up suddenly against a quiet sky.

For this dale country was often enough invaded by the Scots in forgotten occasions,

of which there is no record save in that fighting spirit which every true Yorkshireman still possesses. "Grab and hold tight. Give nothing and owe nothing." That is the deep principle which Yorkshiremen have evolved from their surroundings and their past. But it is as bracing as the air about Willance's Leap, and it has made a race of men.

Hipswell

Another place of interest lying within a short distance of Richmond is the village of Hipswell, which stands between two streams which make a wonderful clear music all day long. A comparatively modern church has been built to replace an older one in a field called Chapel Garths. The number of old churches in these dales, however, does seem to point out the irreconcilable fact that fighting and praying at their most active period go together.

Anyway we find all round Richmond the loveliest monuments to the faith of the past,

though it must not be forgotten that Wycliffe is supposed by some to have been born at Hipswell Hall, and to have been roused to his fiery indignation against the religious houses by the abuses which he saw practised in them.

Another authority states that he was born at Wycliffe on the Tees, and Leland, who was sent by the King to inquire into the matter, was informed that he was born at Spreswell, "a poore village a good myle from Richmond."

The church was rebuilt in 1811, but the registers date from 1664.

The manor-house is now a farm, and is a fine example of fifteenth-century architecture, which remains pretty well as it was when Alan Fulthorpe built it in the time of Richard III. The last Fulthorpe married Jane Wharton, and through her the property passed into the Wandesford family.

Any one who likes walking may stroll from Hipswell down into Colburn, to which the name was given because of the clear, cold beck on which the village stands. The

simple people of the past seemed to possess a gift which we have lost for the naming of places, and one is constantly struck by the rich, poetic aptness of the names of streams, and woods, and pastures, as well as villages.

The inn is kept—or was—by a Metcalfe —and as this is a rambling history, it may be as well to say now, that if you are in doubt about the name of any native of Wensleydale or Swaledale it is safe to address them as Metcalfe. In a sporting land one should be a sportsman, and there is more than an even chance that you would be right.

Going on again from Colburn towards the Catterick Bridge you pass the site of another hospice with a chapel, but its place is occupied by a farmhouse, and the great Marmion who founded it is as powerless in these dales, where the very grass blades trembled before him, as vagrant wanderers like you and me.

Something to think about, indeed, as we go down to Catterick with the wind driving the little, white clouds across the blue, and the sun shining.

Catterick

It is possible to take train from Richmond to Catterick, or to drive there, but the wanderer will probably prefer to continue the walk from Colburn, which leads past Thornborough Pasture. There is nothing to be seen now, but this large pasture extends over the site of a famous Brigantian city which was afterwards occupied by the Romans.

According to the historians of the latter period the town of Cataractonium was a centre of some importance, and various Roman remains have been found here during the past four centuries. More recently it was a busy posting town, as may be gathered from the old-fashioned inns which seem to belong, as do so many of these Yorkshire hostelries, to the pages of a Dickens novel —to the jolly days that were, before men began to race after jollity.

And in the inscription upon the grave of the first postmaster of Catterick, in the

churchyard, may perhaps be found, by those who look, a secret that the world is losing—

"Heer lieth buried the bodie of David Batie, the Kinges Ma'ties first postmaster of Cattericke who dep'ted to the marcie of God, the VII daye of Maye, A.D. 1610."

They had no doubt what came at the road's end in those old days—and that perhaps made the road more splendid than they knew.

But there is a veritable highway at Catterick which is one of the most interesting in the world, and extended during the time of the Roman occupation from Richborough in Kent to the Roman wall on the Tyne. It was called Watling Street, and the origin of the name is supposed to be the Saxon *wadla*, a beggar, because the road was in those days the natural resort of mendicants who begged alms of passing travellers. It was a brave voyager, then, who dared to tempt misfortune by refusing to give alms to the beggar in his path, and mediæval history is full of tales which make this point clear.

Watling Street, though afterwards the

great Roman Road, was probably at the beginning a British chariot path constructed very shortly after the first manipulation of iron—so the modern pilgrim who stands for awhile on Catterick Bridge can look up the road into the very dawn of his nation's history.

Bolton-on-Swale

Opposite Catterick on the bank of the Swale is the village of Bolton, where the oldest inhabitant of the dales died at the age of a hundred and fifty — a fact which seems to encourage visitors to seek rejuvenation in this part of the county. Harry Jenkins is mentioned by Sir Richard Graham, Bart., of Norton Conyers, who knew him well, and he really does seem to have been a surprising old person, for he got into serious trouble over a too ardent love-affair at a hundred and five, and at a hundred and thirty was able to work as a farm labourer.

The papers teem nowadays with suggestions for turning age into youth, but no

one has yet thought of starting a sanatorium for the purpose at Bolton-on-Swale, though there certainly does seem to be more foundation for this "cure" than for many others.

A pyramid in the churchyard has been erected to the memory of this remarkable man, with an inscription in which a former Master of Magdalen College, Cambridge, entreats *black* marble not to blush at thus rescuing an encouraging example from oblivion. So that even in death the Spirit of Humour smiles appropriately down upon the grave of Harry Jenkins—for it is quite certain that he could never have lived for a hundred and fifty years in this weary world without its blessed company to keep his heart up.

Reeth

The ordinary road from Richmond, through Grinton, to Reeth, is one of the finest drives in Yorkshire, and the charm and impressiveness lie not so much in the actual form of the hills and woods and water as in the combination with them of an

atmosphere and colouring which no one can describe. Turner painted it in his pictures of this region, which are not so much representations of individual places as impressions of this wild, elusive something which he was able to catch and hold —this spirit of the dales which is, after all, what makes people not only visit them once, but feel they must go back again.

On such an indescribable morning of sun and shadow and the clear sound of running water, it is a good thing to drive or walk along the road to Reeth; and you pass on your way the township of Grinton, in which is situated Swale Hall. The first tea drunk in Swaledale is said to have been served here, though history does not relate whether it was eaten with cream and sugar like a sort of tea-leaf porridge, as actually happened at a wedding elsewhere in Richmondshire.

And perhaps, in a wandering tale, it is here permissible to say a word about the expressiveness of the dalesman's dialect. He says what he has to say and then stops, which is the beginning and end of

literature—life translated into words. And nothing could more actually present the thing intended than a phrase occurring in a story told to a rambler in the Buck Inn at Reeth.

The tale itself was nothing, but the words in which an uneducated man phrased the altitude of youth could not have been bettered.

"Careless—as lads are, before the world begins to straddle upo' their shoulders."

It will be a pity when that goes with the rest of the old things, and we all talk flatly alike.

But to return to facts—this town was once a centre of the Swaledale lead-mining district, and the men of Reeth used to work at the Old Gang Mine. The slopes of the Yore Valley are still rich in ore, which will doubtless be worth exploiting as the means of transit become more developed.

Muker

The wilder and more solitary road from Reeth to Muker, 9 miles, runs through the

old-world village of Helaugh. It, like other places in this valley, has grown smaller through the abandonment of the lead-mines, and was probably a hunting-seat of the Gaunts when the Manor of Helaugh was one of the best boar and wolf tracks in the north. At that time a certain kind of horn or trumpet was blown every evening, to call the cattle home out of reach of the prowling wolves. This custom is still kept up in some parts of the Continent, and visitors to the remoter parts of Norway may hear for themselves how it used to sound in Swaledale — a peculiar loud, dull blast is still blown on a wooden trumpet 5 feet long called a "lure."

The valley of the Swale, upon which we glance back before turning towards Wensleydale, looks grand but rather sombre from this point of view, and the river is said by some to be the Jordan of Yorkshire, because Paulinus in one day baptized in it "above ten thousand men, besides women and children." The chronicler adds, wishing perhaps to disarm incredulity, that the

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BUTTERTUBS PASS.

Apostle having baptized ten, sent those into the stream to baptize a hundred, and so multiplied his assistants as the rite proceeded, while he prayed upon the bank.

A mile above Muker is the village of Thwaite, the starting-point for the famous Buttertubs Pass, which is the road taken by those who like climbing and do not mind a very rough pathway. But it is quite possible to drive by another road, and this is constantly done by tourists from Swaledale to Wensleydale.

Buttertubs Pass

This pass, which earns that title more on account of its steepness than its height, is the ancient road between Swaledale and Wensleydale, and only a very little while ago it was the wildest spot in one of the remotest byways of England. A daring wanderer or two has left a chronicle behind to tell of his great explorations in the Yorkshire Dales, but for years together,

pedlars, and farmers, and people belonging as much to this wild region as the stones and heather, were the only travellers upon this lonely path. And, as they lived by dairy produce, it was natural enough to give the name of Buttertubs to the circular chasms in the limestone just below the summit. They are dark, cavernous pits, walled round with splintered limestone which takes many fantastic shapes, and there is no wonder that many tales have been told about strange crimes committed on the Buttertubs Pass.

No one with an imagination, standing there towards the end of a grey day, could fail to picture other travellers in the past who must have been benighted in that lonely spot—the very atmosphere demands a fierce shepherd, driven by envy and hunger, and a hawker with his valuable pack, or a farmer with the payment for wool and cheeses in his pocket.

There must be many such tales unwritten and only lingering on in the minds of some old men and women who will never tell,

but a sufficient number have been preserved to make the Buttertubs Pass an eerie place unless you go over it at high noon in the sunshine, though Shumner Fell is only 2000 feet, and Lovely Seat, which faces it, is still lower.

It is a steep and tiresome road, and every green ridge climbed reveals another to be surmounted after, but at last the summit is reached, and there spreads before the eye a wonderful panorama of this vast hill-country. One shadowy hilltop rises behind the other, and along the wide, open valleys shine the emerald pastures of Wensleydale. The first real knowledge comes home to you, then, of the jewelled colouring which is refreshing your jaded sight as the air is stimulating your tired brain.

For that is one great charm of these sister dales of Wensleydale and Swaledale—the clear blue of the flowers, the strong, pure green of the trees and fields, the golden water.

You stand, looking down into Wensleydale, and a bird sings out quite near, emphasising

the stillness; you can, if you listen, hear the wind stir in a tree a hundred yards away — peace settles down upon your soul.

Health to your body, refreshment to your mind, peace to your soul.

Surely—that is a real holiday.

CHAPTER IV

HUMOUR AND SUPERSTITION

BEFORE descending into Hawes—if you have walked over the Buttertubs Pass—or into Leyburn if you have driven from Richmond, it might be as well to pause for a breathing space and consider the people themselves. If you are a Yorkshireman or a Yorkshirewoman you will know as much about them as any one, which is not, after all, saying a very great deal. For any single person is a mystery, but Yorkshire people taken together present a mystery of mysteries. They are so reticent and hard on the outside, so determined to keep what they have grasped, that it is almost impossible to see what lies underneath.

But there is something underneath so very different. A fierce romanticism, a high religious fervour. So, of course, when those qualities are joined to a great talent for

explaining away anything which it is not convenient to admit, and a positive passion for obtaining the last halfpenny, you do get something rather incomprehensible.

The great difficulty which strangers feel in dealing with us Yorkshire people lies in our queer sort of independence, which permits us to be paid—overpaid if the other side desires—but will not allow us to be patronised.

The attitude of the well-intentioned traveller who desires to be pleasant but slightly patronising, is odious to the true Yorkshireman; as Mr. Blakeborough says, this attitude was epitomised by a man who remarked, "A wee'ant let anybody clap me on t' back."

And it is well to remember that the sturdy dalespeople who are ready enough to be kind and obliging if taken the right way, do object to being figuratively "clapt on t' back" by any but their familiar friends.

But the cement which welds together all these opposing qualities and gives them firmness is a real and natural sense of

humour. It is not always pleasing, and rather takes the form of "besting" the hearer, but it is none the less humorous in spite of that. For instance, a stranger in a village inn was one day telling a wonderful tale about an accident from which his son had recently recovered. The tale was a little too wonderful even for a bar parlour, but most of the audience made polite exclamations of surprise. Only one old man in the corner smoked and said nothing. So the narrator looked towards him and said testily, "Perhaps you doubt my words?"

"No," said the old man, only in a Yorkshire dialect too broad to reproduce, "no, I've no call to doubt owt that you've telled us, for one of my lads once swallowed a pin, and, you may make what you like on it, but in less than a month after it come out of the back of his *brother's* neck. That'll match your tale, anyway."

That is not at all intended as an example of Yorkshire humour at its best, because that is almost impossible to write down, but

it shows, I hope, the *character* of the humour which prevails among the village people.

There are a great many stories about the close-fistedness of the Yorkshireman, and it is a fact that he does not, as he says, "slop money about." But he is capable of great and stern sacrifices for the sake of religion, honour, or family pride.

Still, he loves to get the best of a bargain not only as a business affair, but as a sport; it exercises something in him which gives a keener zest for living; and a story is told of the Yorkshire horse-dealers who made an "unseen swap," to find eventually that one horse was dead lame and would never go again, and the other dead. But each had experienced a moment of perfect enjoyment when he thought himself to have "bested" the other, and they finished with a chuckle. The chuckle ran round the neighbouring villages—not a pretty smile at pretty things but an appreciation of essential funniness of life—for that is how they laugh in Yorkshire.

And if humour is a part of existence here,

even more is, or was, superstition. For Board Schools are splendid and necessary institutions, but they are killing superstition —and perhaps natural humour as well. Anyway, as the old customs are dying out, it may perhaps be a good plan to put a few of them into this rambling history, just as you press flowers between the pages of an old guide-book, so that they may remind you of days gone by.

I shall speak only of such customs as still exist, though in remote places, and likely soon to be discontinued.

At Christmas, the "vessel-cups" (from wassail-cup) still come round, carrying a doll in a box, which lies on cotton wool with artificial flowers or evergreens around it, and they sing the following song :—

"God bless the master of this house,
The mis-ter-ess also,
And all the little chil-der-en
That round your table go.

For it is the time of year
When we travel far and near,
So we wish you a merry Chris-e-mas
And a happy New Year."

On New Year's morning the first person who comes over the threshold is the "lucky bird," and in many places he brings a piece of evergreen into the house as an omen of plenty.

There are, or were, of course, a great many superstitions relative to courtship and marriage, and a girl may see her future husband in a dream by fasting all day on the Eve of St. Agnes, save for a little stale bread and parsley tea. She then retires to rest, remakes her bed, putting upon it clean sheets and pillow-cases, and repeats as she lies down, the following lines :—

> "St. Agnes, I pray unto thee,
> I, a maid, would married be,
> So thou my husband show to me."

The fortunate man will appear in a dream, and the lady can devote her waking hours to the arrangement of the trousseau.

But the strange thing is this—that there are many variations of this same charm, but they all seem to be designed exclusively for female use. I have, so far, come across no

charm by which Yorkshire men seek supernatural aid in their choice of a wife.

The indications of marriage, however, are far less numerous than the signs of death and misfortune, which are so thick upon the ground that the person thoroughly versed in Yorkshire folklore can scarcely cross the road without being warned of impending danger or dissolution.

The death-watch or ticking spider is a real and most familiar herald of death in almost all country villages, even where other superstitions have died out; and in many places the passing bell is still held to have the power of driving away evil spirits, so that the soul may travel up unhindered to that dim place above the church-steeple, which is heaven.

When the family of the departed keep bees it is necessary that some one should inform them of the death at once, and there is a very clear picture in my mind, now, of an old woman standing by a hive with the tears streaming down her worn face, as she tapped gently upon the hive, and told the bees that her son was dead.

And there is another belief, deep-rooted, less talked about, which prevails among the people of the Yorkshire Dales—the strange belief that the living can hold back the dying. How much truth there is in this, no one can tell, but it arises from something deeper than mere superstition; it has its origin in things which belong to the dim beginnings of the ages.

You may hear two women talk together with grave eyes and lowered voices outside some little house, one saying to the other, "Poor thing—she would have gone before this—but her daughter holds on to her so."

And as you hear that, you see the grey soul floating out towards eternity, held by the single thread of a daughter's passionate devotion.

It is not known when the Lyke Wake Dirge was sung for the last time in the north, though Mr. Blakeborough remembers talking to an old man who heard it chanted over a distant relative of his in about 1800. But a superstition closely allied to this is still held by some old people of the dales,

who say that the soul after death passes over Whinny Moor, a place full of whins and brambles; and as the owner of the soul had done to others, so would its passage across the moor be hard or easy.

It may perhaps be interesting to give a part of this dirge, as it was dictated by a dalesman to Mr. Blakeborough; though slightly modified so as to render the dialect intelligible to the ordinary reader.

THE LYKE WAKE DIRGE

When thou fra hither gangs away,
(Every night an' all),
To Whinny Moor thou comest at last,
(An' Christ tak' up thy soul),
If ever thou gav' o' thy siller and gold,
(Every night an' all),
At the Bridge of Dread thou'll find foothold,
(An' Christ tak' up thy soul),
But if siller and gold thou never gave none,
(Every night an' all),
Thou'll down, down tumble towards Hell flames,
(An' Christ tak' up thy soul).

Although there is a dreary place called Whinny Moor, the name is used here, of course, in a mythical sense, to represent the dreary tract across which the departing soul

must travel. There are other versions of the song, which are probably nearer than this one to the original of pre-Reformation times, but I give a few lines of this one because it was the last version actually used in Yorkshire.

And now, after so much about death, it may perhaps be as well to finish these rambling remarks concerning Yorkshire customs by relating a few superstitions connected with the other end of life. Those who have babies should be careful when they cut the precious infants' nails for the first time, lest worse happen, for—

> "Cut 'em o' Monday, cut 'em for health,
> Cut 'em o' Tuesday, cut 'em for wealth,"

But

> "Cut 'em o' Sunday, he'd better be dead,
> For ill-luck and evil 'll lie on his head."

And here is another horrible warning to young fathers and mothers in which no one else will be interested. If you have decided on a name for your offspring, *stick to it*; because if either parent happens to say, "We will call her Mary," and she is after-

wards called Caroline, she will grow up to be a liar, and probably given to the use of aliases. In addition to this, the cradle must be paid for before it crosses the threshold, or the poor little occupant will end its days without the means "to pay for its lodgings on the earth or in it."

One might talk on endlessly about these odd beliefs which still lurk everywhere in the Yorkshire Dales, though they will soon be frightened away like the fairies, and we shall all know that there is nothing in any wood or moonlit field, save atoms for which we can perfectly well account.

No child, even now, for instance, can feel the thrill that I knew when I once looked up at a little grey house in which dwelt a "wise woman." I was never allowed to go and see her, but every time I drove past that little, desolate house I felt the presence of Wonder.

And it is not so many years since Molly Cass the witch lived near Leeming Mill, where she foretold the strange death of two lovers in the river Swale close by; and

Peggy Flaunders, who died in 1835, was as malicious and powerful, according to all accounts, as any mediæval sorceress. Her lighter hours were spent in preventing cows from giving their milk, horses from drawing their loads, and such-like trifles; but when she settled down seriously to business she could ruin a man for life with a glance from her evil eye, or a couple of lines of doggerel.

One would give a great deal to have one of these women back again for an hour's truthful talk—they had grasped so strangely, through all their gross ignorance, the wonderful principle of suggestion, and they had somehow chanced upon the secret of applying it.

Ailer Wood, Nancy Newgill, Wrightson the wise man, the hobmen, who are the brownies under another name, these are all gone within a century; but in the quiet old churchyards and round the dim corners at twilight, you may still fancy you hear the stirring of the unseen—if you listen in the right way.

A hare slips through the long grass—it is

surely Jane Wood, the witch, off on her nightly frolic; a hedgehog creeps between the misty cows on the pasture—it is perhaps Nancy Newgill seeking milk for her evening meal.

You feel a little pleasant thrill as you whisper to your companion, "There she goes!"

And your companion no doubt answers back, uninterested, "It's only a hare. Nothing to get excited about in an ordinary hare."

But you have felt for a moment as your forefathers did, when the whole world was full of mystery and wonder.

CHAPTER V

WENSLEYDALE

HAWES, though quite accessible by rail, and with good, level roads leading to it, is nevertheless especially a centre for the pedestrian, because there are so many romantic paths showing the Wensleydale scenery of water and greenery at its best, which can only be reached on foot.

There is plenty of accommodation in the town, but it is not in itself a particularly interesting place, and until about the fourteenth century there were no towns or villages in Wensleydale above Bainbridge, all being unenclosed moor, peopled with wolves, boars, stags, and other wild game.

It is situated, however, in the midst of beautiful mountain scenery, and many fine cascades are easily reached from it. Good fishing is to be had, and there is no difficulty

in obtaining conveyances if these are required. It is a great centre for market produce, and large quantities of butter and the famous Wensleydale cheese are made in the neighbourhood.

Good butter and cheese, in fact, are to be had all over the dale, and those who like to sense the real local atmosphere of a place will do well to walk for some hours in that keen and buoyant air and then go into some farmhouse, as we did, for cheese, and the best bread in the world, and fresh butter. The bread will be of three kinds, even in the most out-of-the-way and lonely spots, and is made of whole meal, white meal, or sweetened and with raisins and currants; and to lunch on it, before an open window, with the pleasant smell of a farmhouse kitchen mingling with that of a few hardy flowers outside, is to have a very pleasant experience.

The rambler goes on his way afterwards, feeling, as we felt, that life is a splendid thing if men only knew how to live it, and meaning to come again to the farmhouse

for a whole summer, sometime, so as to quietly enjoy this atmosphere of wholesome labour and rest well earned.

We never shall go back, in all probability, but we took away with us a memory which will refresh us in the midst of a busy life, like the scent of a flower from a country garden.

All about the head of the Yore or Ure, which is the river flowing through Wensleydale, the scenery is wild and romantic, and weeks might be spent in exploring the neighbourhood by those who enjoy long tramps through a lovely country where the fine air seems to ward off fatigue.

Hardraw Force

There are many small waterfalls, and the fresh sound of running water is as much a feature of the dales as the clear colour of the pastures, but the principal cascade near Hawes is Hardraw Force, on the north side of the valley, which has an unbroken plunge of 100 feet, is surrounded by high rocks, and

is approached by a gloomy valley which adds greatly to its impressiveness. If you chance to be there at a time when the sunlight strikes across the foaming yellowish water, turning it to an indescribable creamy gold, you will see, I think, why our ancestors found nymphs and fairies in the waterfalls. For as the cascade flings itself over the edge of the rock, there appear to be dim wings lifted in the frothing mass—as if the waterfall were full of half-seen water-sprites at play.

You watch—you grow almost dizzy as you watch them plunge down with a rush and flutter of wet wings—and then you see them rise, misty, almost imperceptible, to the top of the scar again.

It is a fine game, this, watching the water-fairies in the falls of the Northern Dales, and a thing to take a man back to the youth of the world, when telephones were safely locked away in the mystery-box of the future, and people had time to dream.

The Green Dragon Inn most appropriately guards the entrance to this valley where the

fairies play in the sunshine, and a little distance away is Cotter Force, a beautiful but more peacefully rural spot. Above are the Teesdale woods, and some of the rarer wild flowers are to be found here, including the true columbine.

In returning to Hawes the path goes through level meadows, where the cows graze which are to produce the cheese and butter already mentioned; but though the aspect is that of a rich agricultural country, there still is a sense of solitude and remoteness. Thought, habits, and customs have not yet become standardised in Wensleydale, and the herdsmen may still occasionally be heard counting their sheep in the old numerals which are supposed to have lingered from Celtic times.

Jain, tain, peddero, pitts——

As we hear the old shepherd count thus, we realise that it is the peasant who is the aristocrat of speech—he holds, while others cast away.

Tayter, later, overro, coverro, disk——

So he stands by the roadside, counting his

R. Falconer Jameson.]

COTTER FOSS.

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sheep, and passing treasures of speech unbroken down the ages, while we feel superior as we put a shilling into his horny hand.

But if Hawes itself is a place of comparatively recent date, the bare hills around were once the site of a great and populous city which gathered in all the rich produce from the fertile valley of Wensleydale.

Legend of Semmerwater

Between Hawes and Bainbridge lies the lake of Semmerwater, a gloomy spot in the finest weather, and if you see it on a gloomy day with low clouds hovering over the grey water, you can quite well understand that a story should have grown up in the people's minds to match this wild and dreary scene which they rode past on desolate evenings after Askrigg market.

And those are the fine tales—the ones that grow naturally in the heart of a people—but they are very difficult to put down in writing; the freshness and vigour are not to be caught and caged in written words.

You want to hear them in the spoken language of the place where they grew, with the keen air blowing all around you, and faith in your heart.

Then you will quite believe, looking across the gloomy expanse of Semmerwater, that a city once stood there which grew very evil, and that the devil in person was a most frequent visitor there. You inspect Curlew Stone just at the foot of the lake, on which are strange marks, now said by foolish strangers to be scratches from the cold ice of the glacial period; but you know quite well that they were made by the action of fire and brimstone, and are the actual prints of the "Owd Lad's" nails.

And one winter's day an angel, too, came to the town, disguised as a beggar, and he went round from one prosperous house to the other, shivering in the bitter moorland air, and asking for alms and shelter. But all the people were too busy, or too selfish, or too engrossed in their own pleasure, to trouble about a strange beggar. So he trudged wearily along what is now the east

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SEMMERWATER.

side of the lake, and at last, quite spent and footsore, he came to a little grey house at the end of the vale. A poor old man and his wife lived there, to whom life had given nothing for themselves save just bare food and shelter. But they shared it with a good heart, and were very kind to their brother poor-man as he sat at their rough table, and ate dale cheese and bread and milk, which was all they had to offer. Then he lay down on a straw mattress and slept until morning. When he arose he went to the door, and lifting up his hands he looked towards the wicked town asleep in the dawn, and said—

"Semmerwater rise!
Semmerwater sink!
And swallow the town
All save this house
Where they gave me meat and drink!"

Then the water rose silently in the dawn, and flooded all the sleeping town, so that only a lake lay still, as it does now, beneath the full sunrise of the morning.

The little house is left to show that the tale is true, and those who live near Semmer-

water say that the roofs of the buried city are sometimes seen glimmering beneath the deep water on a very still, clear day.

Those interested in bird-lore will find many rare wading-birds on the banks, such as swans and wild geese. The common tern and sea-swallow and several kinds of gulls frequent it, and the little grebe breeds there occasionally. Teal and widgeon are also found there.

The northern shore is boggy and fringed with alders and many other native water-loving trees and shrubs, and is golden with the fleur-de-lis in early summer. In fact, this neighbourhood is a paradise for the botanist, and at a farm at Stalling Busk, above the lake, the daughter of the house has made a wonderful collection of wild flowers. The varieties are extraordinarily numerous, and there is no doubt that this neighbourhood affords a great opportunity for the pursuit of this charming hobby.

At the north-west corner of Semmerwater is a tiny village devoted to the culture of

ISLINGT

R. Falconer Jameson.]

BAINBRIDGE FALLS.

geese which might be distant descendants of the famed geese of history, for they are as quick as watch-dogs to notify the approach of a stranger, and to make themselves unpleasant if necessary.

Raydale House is picturesquely situated at the head of Semmerdale, and was the scene of one of the last acts of domestic warfare in England. It was the climax of a dispute between the Robinsons of Worton and the Metcalfes of Nappa for right of possession to Raydale House and lands, and is chiefly interesting because it shows that the modern spirit was not necessary to turn Yorkshire women into fighters. Lady Metcalfe was fined for persuading a woman to set fire to Raydale House.

So one sees that there really *is* nothing new under the sun.

Bainbridge

The overflow of Semmerwater is called the Bain, and fills the village of Bainbridge continually with a sort of fresh, jocund music

as it ripples over the shallow ledges of rock under the bridge.

The inn of the Rose and Crown—the arms of Yorkshire—was established in the year 1445. So a good many generations of Yorkshiremen have gathered on its sanded floor through long, long winters, before railways came to teach people that great loneliness which comes from being able to get everywhere, and to go in search of life, instead of making it at home.

Bainbridge was one of the Roman stations in the North Riding of Yorkshire under the name of Bracchium, and the outline of an encampment can be seen at Brough Hill, one of the round-shaped hillocks standing in the middle of a valley which are characteristic of the Wensleydale district. The winter camp was situated here, and the summer camp near the summit of Addleburgh, about a mile and a half away, where remains of trenches were found in 1570.

The summit is 1500 feet high, and it is a refreshing thing to stand there and feel the keen air across your face, and hear the

curlews calling. And here again, unless you are weary of the supernatural, you may like to remember that a giant once rested with his chest of gold as he went from Skipton Castle to Pendragon. He was angered by his fatigue, and took up his burden again, crying out—

> "Spite of either God or man,
> To Pendragon Castle thou shalt gang!"

But the high gods are not to be so defied, therefore the chest of gold fell from his huge shoulders, and a heap of stones rose to cover it, and there the cairn remains unto this day.

The treasure may be recovered by any mortal to whom a fairy appears in the form of a hen or an ape; but the only man who fulfilled all the qualifications had the misfortune to swear when he was pulling it out, and that broke the charm.

So the chest of gold still remains to be found by any adventurous rambler who is warranted not to swear.

A portion of a Roman road runs westward

along the side of Cragg End, and on toward Ingleton.

After the departure of the Romans, Bainbridge became, in Norman times, the headquarters of the Forest of Wensleydale. It is surrounded by bleak hills patterned with grey stone, and has grim stone buildings dotted about in here and there called hamels, which are more like small fortresses than cow-stables, and where it seems far more probable that cows might be imprisoned for domestic shortcomings than merely sheltered from wind and storm.

A very ancient custom, dating from the days of the old Forest Laws, is still maintained at Bainbridge. A horn is blown at ten o'clock every night from the Feast of the Holy Rood on 27th September to Shrove Tuesday, and many a traveller belated on those lonely hills in winter-time will have had cause to bless the hoarse sound of the horn as it rose from the sheltered village.

One of the horn-blowers, named James Metcalfe, who died in 1864, had been in office for seventy years and used a cow's

horn which was said to be some hundreds of years old; but the present one is that of an African buffalo, and has only been in use about thirty years.

The Society of Friends has had a chapel here since the early days of Quakerism, and it is like breathing the quiet air of a more restful time than ours to sit on the wooden bench in the meeting-house and hear the leaves blowing in the wind while those present wait until the Spirit moves them to speak. You come away when the service is over, after being kindly greeted by this little company of Friends, with a very unusual sense of having seen peace.

Then you go across to the inn, and eat a meal of good Wensleydale lamb and fruit-tart and cream, and you think, if you are that sort of person, that it would be good to spend your life in one of the square stone houses, and to have it bounded by the hills around, and marked out, Sunday after Sunday, until the end, by quiet hours in the little chapel.

But the world outside comes back

with the postman on Monday morning, and so you go away from Bainbridge, hoping to return, perhaps never returning, but keeping always a most pleasant memory.

CHAPTER VI

ASKRIGG

THERE are many interesting walks in the neighbourhood of Askrigg, and in the fells or ravines which descend from the moors behind the town may be seen some of the most lovely waterfalls in the district. The moor walk from Askrigg to Muker in Swaledale (six miles) forms a delightful ramble for those who are not easily fatigued, and the views from the summit of the road are particularly fine, including such well-known landmarks as Ingleborough, Penyghent, and Great Whernside.

The town is pleasantly situated on the Yore, and was until quite recently the centre of the great cheese industry, which is now, however, falling into abeyance, because the milk can be easily taken by train to such

distant places as Liverpool, Scarborough, Hull, etc., where it is sold as new.

There are clocks from Askrigg all over the north of England which were made from beginning to end by one man, and they bear the unmistakable stamp of personality which has been necessarily lost in these days, when the maker of the pendulum may never even see the completed clock.

The famous Drunken Barnaby, a chronicler who has left more of value behind him than any of his sober neighbours, records that he visited this place.

> "Thence to Askrigg, market-noted,
> But no handsomeness aboot it.
> Here poor people lived by knitting"—

which was the literal truth until about fifty years ago.

King's Arms Hotel was built by John Pratt in 1767; he was a noted horsebreeder, and in his curious epitaph in Askrigg Church it is stated that—

"The excellent qualities of his heart were eminently evidenced By his bounty to his poor relations. And though often hard-

pressed by that jockey Necessity He never swerved out of the course. Once when his finances were impaired he received a seasonable supply By the performance of *A MIRACLE*. He died Almost universally lamented."

This is only a brief extract from the long epitaph, but Mr. John Pratt remains so delightful in death that no wonder he was almost universally lamented.

Miracle was the name of a racehorse which restored this gentleman's fallen fortune.

The church itself is chiefly of fifteenth-century date, and has been restored during the past century, and in the churchyard is a monument inscribed to that apparently remarkable character, "an honest attorney."

A flagged path crosses this churchyard, and a man was walking down it one evening on his way home, when the darkness without and the Yorkshire ale within caused him to stumble and fall into an open grave which had been dug ready for the following morning. He was very drunk, and promptly went to sleep, not knowing at all where he

was, but just before ten o'clock he woke up and looked round. The moon had now risen, and as he climbed out of the grave, he heard the Bainbridge horn, which sounds at ten o'clock, booming drearily across the silence. He was still bemused, and he thought he had died and been buried, and that the Bainbridge horn was the last trump, sounding to wake those who were saved from their long sleep.

But no one else emerged from any other grave—the place lay in solemn quiet under the still moonlight, as it had done for hundreds of years — so the man looked round him and muttered in a half-dazed fashion, "Well, this is a poor show for Askrigg."

Then he stumbled along a few steps thinking himself the only one righteous, until his brain began to clear ; and the neighbour who had watched him from behind a tombstone came forward to lead him home ; but the tale was not forgotten in Askrigg town.

At one time a custom of great importance

here was the Garland Race, which was run on the Feast of St. Oswald, the patron saint of the church ; but it is now obsolete.

It was instituted by a lady spinster to punish philanderers of the male sex, as more than one of this class had courted her and then retired before the wedding day. She left a small field at her death, the rent of which was to be competed for each year by males, who were obliged to run up a very steep incline known as Garland Course. A garland of flowers was placed on the winner's head, and there are people still alive who have witnessed the ceremony.

To endow the most muscular philanderer every year with money and a crown of flowers seems hardly a punishment, and an equal lack of logic may have governed the lady's unsuccessful love affairs. But perhaps she laughed as she lay dying, to think of all the brave lads who would pant and strain up the steep fellside at her bidding. For a joke was a precious thing in those days— worth paying for — even if it were a bad one.

Mill Gill Force

This is a fine and beautifully situated waterfall, of which Wordsworth has written, so lesser pens may well leave its description alone.

A few hundred yards higher up the ravine is Whitfield Force, surrounded by a wood which is probably the highest native wood remaining in Yorkshire. But in wet weather this last fall is not very easy of access. The wild flowers near here are most beautiful and numerous, and the sides of the ravine form a happy hunting-ground for the botanist, the curious baneberry being native here, while many other rare species are to be found by the interested seeker.

Nappa Hall

Within easy walking distance of Askrigg or Bainbridge is Nappa Hall, which was the chief seat of the Metcalfes in Wensleydale, and is still one of the most important of the ancient homesteads in Yorkshire.

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MILL GILL FORCE.

SMITHSONIAN INSTITUTION

The name of Metcalfe or Medcalfe is a very common one in Yorkshire, though not, I think, elsewhere, and the family was certainly established in these parts as early as the thirteenth century.

The hall was erected in 1450 by Thomas Metcalfe, who was Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster in the reign of Richard III. It was completed as it now stands by the last Mr. Metcalfe of Nappa in 1747. The farmer at present living there bears the same name, but is not a descendant of the builder of the house.

It formerly contained a great deal of oak wainscotting, but this has now been nearly all removed; and Nappa Hall is another of the many places which Mary Queen of Scots is said to have visited about the time when she was imprisoned at Bolton Castle.

The Metcalfe clan rose into power during the reign of Henry V., and when a Sir Christopher Metcalfe was late High Sheriff of York he met the judge of assize attended by three hundred horsemen, "all

of his own name and lineage, clad in uniform habits, and mounted on white horses."

A fact in connection with the Metcalfes which will interest publishers and authors only—is that one of that family wrote a book on shorthand in 1706, which passed through *fifty-five* editions.

The word, Nappa, is supposed by some to have come from "hnappa," the genitive plural of the Icelandic term for flowers, and it does seem very probable that this name should have been given to the place by some Scandinavian settlers in England. For part of the road leading from Bainbridge to the hall on the day I walked there was like a pathway through a garden. All along were masses of vivid blue and feathery white, waving in a light breeze against a background of such clear, strong green as can scarcely be seen anywhere else in the world. It had been raining, and the blue and white of a June sky were reflected in the pools on the road, as if flowers had been thrown there, too, to make our way more splendid,

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NAPPA HALL.

and a lark rose up from the field over the hedge, singing what I wished to say.

Nappa Scar, if we allow the Icelandic derivation, would be translated as "the cliff of flowers," and those who visit it in high summer will find, I think, that it deserves its title.

Near Nappa Mill is a small waterfall, well worth visiting, called "Cat Leap."

Woodhall

This village lies about a mile farther to the east, and Woodhall Park was formerly a royal chase. There still exists a very ancient warren of silver-grey rabbits, the skins of which were at one time very valuable. They are born black, and become lighter and lighter until they are five months old, when they attain their true colour.

At one time a large number of the inhabitants of this neighbourhood and of Swaledale used to meet at Askrigg Hill Fair in July, where faction fights invariably broke out among the revellers. But nothing

more exciting than a steam roundabout is now to be seen on that occasion.

The road before mentioned between Askrigg and Swaledale is the one by which these merry-makers of old used to come to their yearly festival, and as you walk over this wild and romantic path across the moor, you perhaps try to peer back, too, into a time which is not very far off, and yet so extraordinarily different from our own. You catch an echo of laughter on the breeze—laughter at jokes that were in vogue when the Stone-Age man sat down on a flint—the dear family jokes of the human race. And as age comes to a man when there is no one left to laugh at the family jokes, which are so foolish to outsiders, and yet mean to those who made them, youth, and hope, and happy days gone by; so age is gaining upon the race. The laughter in the world now comes from those who want to laugh, not from those who laugh because they cannot help it.

But as you go farther afield across the moor, the past of rough laughter and wild and perilous adventure seems very near after all.

There is such a sense of remoteness from artificial conditions as you look across the grim hills rising one behind the other, and you feel as if you had come face to face with Reality at last.

At the back of your mind you know, of course, how the things that matter and the things that don't matter will become hopelessly confused once more when you return to the common round and daily task. But just now, in this clear air, in this loneliness, —they are sorted.

CHAPTER VII

AYSGARTH WATERFALLS

As you ramble along, either on foot or otherwise, towards the beautiful little town of Aysgarth, the sound of clear, running water which accompanies travellers all through the dales may be heard to deepen and increase in volume. It is as if the prelude were hastening to an end in a fine rush of quick trills and thundering chords, and when you reach Aysgarth Bridge you know the reason. For there before you is a great torrent, broken into a thousand eddies by the rocks, so that the foam flashes white upon the golden surface of the waterfall, before it falls into the glowing bronze of the pool below. Then comes a deeper wine colour, and at last the river flows darkly under the shadow of the bridge.

No words can describe the colouring of

the Aysgarth Falls, if they are seen as I saw them, in the full sunshine after a heavy flood. And to that feast of colour is added the stimulating keenness of the air—the pale clearness of a northern sky—the whole producing an effect which can never be forgotten. It is something akin to the brilliance of Alpine flowers on the edge of melting snow—the visible expression of passionless radiance.

At some little distance above this bridge is another waterfall called the High Force, which is even more imposing, and a third named Middle Force, though rather less easy of access, is well worth visiting; indeed, it is perhaps the most beautiful of the three falls, because the broad stream rushes here over a series of shelving rock terraces, and the banks on either side are covered with waving trees, brilliant green grass, and a multitude of flowers.

There is no wonder that Turner found inspiration in this part of Yorkshire, but it is indeed remarkable that the drawings proved difficult to dispose of when finished. The one of Aysgarth Force sold eventually for

five pounds, and the others would not sell at all. Eventually, when Turner's reputation increased, they became saleable, and it would be difficult to estimate the value of these Yorkshire drawings at the present time.

It seems impossible to leave this subject without making some mention of the very great service which Mr. John Henry Metcalfe of Leyburn rendered to all lovers of beauty when he prevented the erection of a huge brick or stone viaduct on skew arches just above the High Force. His letter to the *Pall Mall Gazette* in 1883 led to the formation of an Aysgarth Defence Association with Lord Wharncliffe as President.

It would have been a real loss to England if the falls had been ruined entirely by the bridge and embankment, as they must have been; for natural beauty such as this is as much a part of the nation's treasury as the Tower or Westminster Abbey.

Aysgarth

The name of the town is of Celtic origin, and one can well imagine how wandering

settlers in the hushed dawn of history may have come upon Aysgarth, and decided to make their home there, giving it for a first name that of the sound they heard all day long. For *ais* means waterfall in one of the Celtic dialects.

The annual feast is still kept up, but the old spirit has gone from it, and the maypole which stood near the stocks in the market-place fell down about half a century ago, and has never been replaced. Maypole dancing may be revived as a show, but it has ceased to be the natural outcome of the country-people's joy because the winter was over and spring come round again. And it was this spirit alone which gave the custom a charm like that of the cuckoo's call; there is nothing in it any more when the dancers prance round solemnly and self-consciously with an eye on the audience.

That fallen maypole is a sign of something that has gone—and even if a forest of them were erected now in Aysgarth market-place, that dead jollity could not return.

Mr. H. Speight mentions being present

at the annual feast in 1894, and there calling upon a Mrs. Betty Webster, who was then a hundred and four years old. She was an ardent smoker for fifty years, and attributed the length of her years partly to this habit. But she could work hard in the hayfield at eighty years of age, and seems after all rather to form an advertisement for the air of the Yorkshire Dales than for female indulgence in tobacco.

She had the energy to change her form of worship at the age of a hundred, and she was buried in the old churchyard of Askrigg in 1896.

Aysgarth Church

This church stands a little way from the village, and is of great antiquity, though the present building is in the Perpendicular style of Henry VIII. It has been restored at great expense, and the fine oak rood-loft and reading-desk were brought from Jervaux Abbey. Upon this there is the carved inscription—

A. S. Abbas. Anno D'mi 1536—

the date at which the last Abbot of Jervaux

was attainted. The churchyard commands some beautiful views of the surrounding neighbourhood.

In connection with the very thorough and reverent way in which the restorations have been carried out in these Yorkshire churches, I may perhaps be permitted to express one regret. To use a feminine simile, familiar to Yorkshire women who knit stockings—I feel sorry that these churches could not have been darned instead of being refooted. The result would not have been so tidy, but it would have been more satisfying to those who love to see old things as they were.

Still, it seems ungracious to say even so much about the work done by good men and women to provide fitting surroundings for public worship.

Bear Park

This historic mansion overlooks High Force, and was, until the surrender of the monasteries, in the possession of a neighbouring priory.

The older portion of the building was constructed soon after the Reformation, and there is a carved stone built into the north wall which was no doubt brought from Coverham Abbey.

Some fine oak decorates the inside of the house, and the oldest clock in Wensleydale was purchased by the owner some years ago on condition that it remained always in the dale. The maker was obviously better at his own trade than at that of a poet, for the following lines appear on the famous clock :—

"Behold this hand,
Observe ye motions tap,
Man's precious hours
Away like these do slip."

There is a good Alpine garden in the grounds, containing many choice botanical specimens.

Bishopdale

Within a very pleasant ramble from Aysgarth is this secluded valley, so called because it has been from Saxon times a private demesne of the Archbishops of York.

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BOLTON CASTLE.

And on the way is passed an old inn called Palmers' Flatt, which received its name no doubt because it either stands on or near to the site of a pilgrims' hospice.

About a mile farther on is the village of Burton, with the picturesque waterfall formed by the Walden Beck rushing in a double cascade over a bed of shelving rock. Waldendale, from which lovely valley the beck flows, was until quite recent times a haunt of the red-deer, and the wild-cat and pine-martin were still to be found about forty years ago. It was a valuable game preserve in the reign of Richard II. At the foot of a steep hill, commanding fine views of Wensleydale, Bishopdale, and Waldendale, at a house called Sorrell Sykes, once resided the essayist, Mrs. Elizabeth Montague.

In returning to Aysgarth from Burton it is pleasant to go round by Thoralby, which is an old village mentioned in Domesday.

Bolton Castle

Those who approach Bolton from Aysgarth by way of Carperby will have the

magnificent pile before them for a long distance, and no castle that I have ever seen has so impressed me with its dominating quality. It is the feudal spirit transformed into stone and placed in solitary majesty on the great slope, whence it seems still to rule over Wensleydale. I believe that this effect is far less striking if the castle is approached from the other side, and this being the case I would advise any rambler to make a considerable detour, if necessary, to take that way from Carperby to Bolton. The road is excellent for motorists, but in spite of this fact I cannot help suggesting that those who really wish to feel all the charm of the place should leave the car and walk the last mile or so.

It is just one of those places which must be reached by the plodding means which nature has provided, in order to appreciate to the full the wonderful light and shadow on the great slope, and to realise the deep significance of this landmark of a nation's history.

It bears witness of things which already

seem almost like fairy tales to us, from the possession of the manor in Saxon times by the four sons of Baldur, right down to the imprisonment of Mary Queen of Scots there in 1568.

She wrote to Sir Francis Knollys from Bolton Castle, her first letter in English, and adds at the close—

"Excuse my ivel writin thes furst tyme." It is a pathetic little letter, in which she sends "a little token to remember you off the good hop I have in you," and there is a sort of appealing charm about it which remains fragrant to this day, and helps you to realise how she turned the head of every chivalrous youth who crossed her path.

Leyland tells us that the castle took eighteen years to complete, and cost £12,000, an enormous sum for the fourteenth century, at which date it was built by Richard, Lord Scrope, High Chancellor of England.

The same historian also comments on the chimneys in the castle-hall, which were still a great novelty in the dwellings of the great, and he describes "howe chimneys were con-

veyed by tunnells—and by this meanes is the smoke of the harthe in the hawle wonder strangly conveyed."

The four square towers are enclosed by a wall seven feet thick, and the only entrance door at the east end was defended by a massive portcullis. Grooves, and also holes in the top of the arch for chains, can still be seen. The well-head was in an upper chamber, so that in times of siege the supply of water was not cut off.

There is now a museum in the castle where many objects of interest connected with Wensleydale are to be seen.

But the fierce lords of Bolton do not seem to have felt any great need to pay more than a decent deference to the King of kings, and the church opposite, which was built at the same time as the castle, is as small and plain as it could well be made. Many years ago the following quaint lines were written on the east window :—

"Mine be the task, nor fear I flouting scorn,
To guide the rustic and the lowly born.
Then start not reader, at my humble state,
If at this altar zeal and truth await."

But I have no space to linger, as I should like to do, about this stronghold of the Scropes; and, after all, the true rambler can find out far more for himself than I can ever tell. He will hear once more the clash of arms, and see the pageantry and squalor and romance of feudalism.

CHAPTER VIII

LEYBURN

Leyburn is an excellent centre for some of the most interesting and beautiful rambles in the dales, and though there is not a great deal to be seen in the town itself, it is airy, clean, and sunshiny, with accommodation for visitors of a sufficient though not luxurious character.

But the history of Leyburn begins so far back that even Bolton seems modern by comparison, for as soon as the Wensleydale glacier began to melt, men settled on the famous Leyburn Shawl and made a home there amid the rigours and dangers of that far-off time. Stone implements and animal remains have been found here, which can only have belonged to a race inhabiting a very cold climate, and there is little doubt that this place has been inhabited since the

end of the Ice Age in Britain. But it was not until comparatively modern times that the people dared to leave the rocky plateau of Leyburn Shawl for the more sheltered site of Leyburn Town; the word "Shawl" being the Scandinavian hut, a dwelling akin to the Scotch shealing.

It is therefore not surprising that the water-kelpies, who have been driven from nearly all their ancient haunts, should still range about the water meadows near Leyburn seeking to entice the children away to destruction in the river Yore. Or that old people who live in this neighbourhood still cling to superstitions, now only half believed, which belong to a remote antiquity.

But there can be little doubt that all such customs, and stories, and superstitions will have ceased to live before very long, and they will only be found embalmed in books, with all the charm gone from them. However, it is not yet too late for the true rambler to find them lurking, grim with horror and tears, or gay with jollity, about the remoter ways of the Yorkshire Dales.

At this point I find it necessary to offer an apology which has been due for some time, because I really do feel that I am behaving as Mr. Dick did, when he wrote his celebrated memorial; only my trouble is not the head of King Charles, but the past of Yorkshire.

So I will go on at once with my legitimate task and state the plain fact that the view from Leyburn Shawl is truly magnificent, with the massive woodland immediately below the valley plateau and a vast prospect beyond of moor and river, grey castles and ancient churches.

On the Shawl itself, at the eastern entrance to the wood, is the place known as Queen's Gap, where Mary Stuart was captured after her escape from Bolton Castle. She never again recovered her freedom.

The view from Scarth Nick is even more beautiful and well repays those who do not mind a rather steep walk.

The church at Leyburn is a modern one, and among the few objects of interest to be seen actually in the town is the bull ring in

the Market Place, which was used for tethering the animals until about a century ago, when bull-baiting was finally abandoned.

It is impossible to close even a short account of Leyburn without some mention of Mr. William Horne, F.G.S., who knows everything that is to be known about Wensleydale, and is most kind in giving information to any visitors who are really interested in the subject.

Bellerby

There is a delightful walk or drive over the moors from Leyburn to Richmond by way of Bellerby and Hart Leap Well, which latter, of course, has been made famous by Wordsworth in the poem of that name. The distance is about nine miles, and the highest point reaches an altitude of nearly a thousand feet, about a mile beyond Halfpenny House.

The last native wild deer was shot at Bellerby about a hundred years ago, and the old hall has been converted into farm

dwellings. If Mary Stuart had not been captured by "Queen's Gap," it was to have been her next harbour of refuge. The family were evidently of those who cling chivalrously to losing causes, for they suffered greatly in the reign of Charles I. for their attachment to that unfortunate monarch.

Wensley

Though this village has given its name to the valley of the Yore, it is only a charming, model village which testifies to the good that can be achieved by a landlord who takes a right view of his responsibilities. I walked there from Leyburn one Sunday afternoon, and after service in the church I had tea in a house overlooking the village green, which is the original scene of Frith's *Old English Merrymaking*. As my companion and I sat eating the cheese cakes and good Yorkshire bread with the sweet air coming through the open window, we received a wonderful impression of repose. The very atmosphere of a country Sunday

F. Frith & Co.]

WENSLEY CHURCH.

made visible, seemed to rest with the afternoon light upon the little place, and when a yelping dog hurried past at his usual pace, I felt vaguely shocked, as if somebody had sworn in church.

The name of Wensley has, of course, the same derivation as Wednesday, and was probably at one time the site of a temple to Odin.

The Three Horse Shoes Inn is probably the oldest tenement in the village, and is thus mentioned by "Drunken Barnaby" in his *Itinerary*—

> "Thence to Wenchley valley seated
> For antiquity repeated,
> Sheep and shepherd as one brother
> Kindly drink to one another,
> Till pot-hardy, light as feather,
> Sheep and shepherd sleep together!"

It seems not improbable that Barnaby Braithwayt had joined in this kindly pastoral before writing down his impressions of Wensley.

Wensley Church

The church is one of the most interesting to be found in the dales, for it possesses monu-

ments, carved work, and the finest brasses in the whole of North Britain. The choir appears to date from the thirteenth century, but the rest of the building was evidently restored at the beginning of the sixteenth century. On the buttresses of the nave and choir are the arms of the great families Scrope and Neville, De Ros, de la Pole, and Fitz-Hugh.

The monumental brass near the communion table was placed there in memory of Sir Simon-de-Wensley, a priest who lived in the reign of Richard III. It is considered to be one of the finest brasses of a rector which exist, and represents the priest robed in full canonicals, but the inscription was removed by another rector who died in 1607, and who caused a small plate to be let into the stone bearing his own name.

He only followed the examples of the great Ramases in Egyptian temples, but it does not fit in with one's conception of an ideal country parson. The discrepancy between the date of the inscription and the style of the tomb was a puzzle to antiquarians

for a long time, until the will of the supplanter was discovered, in which he left directions that his body should be buried in the tomb of Sir Simon-de-Wensley.

In the vault of the church is the coffin of Mary, Marchioness of Winchester, the eldest of the illegitimate daughters of Emanuel Scrope, last Earl of Sunderland, and upon the top of the coffin lies the heart of this lady in a leaden heart-shaped case.

The finely carved oak stalls and parts of the *parclose* of the Scrope chantry were brought to this church from Easby Abbey at the time of the Reformation.

The font and poor-box are also ancient, while over the south doorway is a sundial with the inscription—

"As a shadow, such is life!"

I stood in the sunshine reading this, and then looked back at the monument in wood and stone to these great families of the dale, who had such a fierce sense of living and such certainty of immortality. A breath from that old time swept across me, bracing

to my soul as the keen air to my body. "As a shadow, so is life!"—but all the same they made it vivid, splendid, tremendously worth living.

They may have been all wrong, these fighting, pillaging followers of a Lord of Love, but they were certain; and it is a good thing to feel—even for a moment—even by proxy—that fine grip of everything in earth and hell and heaven.

So when I turned away from Wensley Church my soul called out a greeting to them in the shades, wherever they may be: for they knew how to live bravely, suffer without whining, and die for an idea.

Still, I was rather glad, as I went farther up the road, to know that these gentlemen were quite safely dead, and that my companion and I could amble peacefully about the dales with no more powerful weapon than a snapshot camera.

And by the time I reached the dinner-table at the Leyburn Inn, I was thankful once more to live in an age when people take such extraordinary care of life, because

they have grown rather uncertain of immortality.

After dinner, tired and happy, I strolled out into the market square and watched the moonlight on the clustered roofs of the little sleeping town. Then I remembered again that inscription over the south door of Wensley Church, but I saw a new meaning in it. For a shadow can only be cast by something which has substantial reality somewhere.

"As a shadow, such is life!"

That happy thought went with me when I rambled, after the way of tired people, through all I had seen that day, before I fell asleep.

CHAPTER IX

SPENNITHORNE

This is a delightful village in which to make a long stay, because it is within walking distance of Leyburn, and is most prettily situated, besides being "the real country," and so far quite unspoilt. It is, also, very sheltered, which is a point to be considered in the case of delicate or elderly people, and there is good farmhouse accommodation to be had at a reasonable price, but this is, of course, limited in quantity.

Fine views are to be seen in rambling about the neighbourhood, and the Yore flows broadly here between rich vegetation and fine trees. The church existed before Domesday, though little remains of the original edifice; but the present building contains a striking fresco of Father Time, which is placed near the entrance in order

to remind all who pass in and out of the shortness of life.

Those interested in architecture may here trace the different periods of design from early Norman to late Tudor styles, and in the east wall of the chancel are two stones having a Runic ornament, while a Saxon monument has been discovered under the chancel. But this is only another example of the great historic interest which these village churches possess for those who care to look for it. And to my mind there is a peculiar pleasure in *finding out* such things, which is quite different from that which we feel when we are, so to speak, hit in the eye by the great show-places of Europe.

This village was the birthplace of a philosopher named John Hutchinson, who was famous in the time of George I., and was supported in his contention that the world must be square by many of the most able men in England. He also refuted the system of gravitation established by Sir Isaac Newton, and is only notable now as being a prominent member of that pathetic

band who, since the dawn of time, have clung against all proof and all reason to the old beliefs. Such people take part in a tragedy which makes all the great tragedies of love and war look little, and there is no wonder that he died from the result of overstrain at the age of 62.

The word "Spennithorne" is derived from Spina, a thorn, because a great many thorn trees flourished there at the time of the Roman occupation.

No one, I think, can fail to be charmed with the exquisite appropriateness of the names in those Yorkshire villages, which the rambler finds to be as natural and right as the river and the trees. They offer a great contrast to the names which people are able to find nowadays for any new suburb or "garden village."

Harmby

Harmby is in the parish of Spennithorne, and there is a pretty little waterfall near the main road through the village. Many wild

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COVERHAM ABBEY.

flowers grow here in the season, and a spring of water may be seen, called the Fairies' Well, which was once provided by the good Saxon King Edwin with an iron drinking-cup which men were asked not to injure "for the love and good-will they bare to their Prince."

For a long time the inhabitants of Harmby disliked walking by the beck after dark, because the murdered Lady of Hernebi had taken shape as a phantom roe, and her murderer had died suddenly here while hunting it. The solitary rambler forty years ago was apt to see a spectral hound chasing a white roe to the sound of baying dogs and horsemen crashing wildly among the underwood. A strange, gruesome, dramatic tale—Jordayne de Harda pursuing the wraith of his victim through the centuries, night after night, on the very spot where he had killed her body.

Coverham Abbey

A short distance from this place runs the little river Cover, and some broken arches

in a farmyard show where Coverham Abbey once stood. There is an old inn which was a great resort of horse-dealers before the railway came to Wensleydale. There is good fishing to be obtained here for those who enjoy a few days quiet in a real country inn.

Jervaux Abbey

About half an hour's walk from Lower Bridge may be seen one of the loveliest ruins in Yorkshire, where an atmosphere of happy meditation has survived the bustle and martial splendour that once made this abbey famous all over England. As I paced up and down the sheltered path where the cloisters once stood, it seemed to me as if I, too, withdrew from the heat and burden of the day, and upon the guide-book in my hand I saw no longer the words: "The Abbey was originally founded at Fors and translated hither in 1156 . . ." but things written in strange black characters, which I could not understand with my mind, only with my soul.

As I sit in a carpeted room with a fire, writing this, the impression remains as clear as it was in that still hour just before sunset, but I cannot put it into words; I can only advise a true rambler to make a pilgrimage to that place, at that hour, so that he may feel the inexpressible charm which has, in a way, nothing to do with the exact features or history of the abbey.

However, the monks who originally settled at Fors, higher up the valley, had anything but a peaceful time of it, and when the first bare dwelling-place was built, the suspicious dalesmen of those days saw in it an element of danger and destroyed the whole building. Even when they succeeded in rebuilding it, and returned there under the leadership of one Peter of Savigny, they were tormented by floods from the Yore, and wolves and "wilde cattes" from the forests.

However, luck always comes to the persevering and the brave, unless they die before it reaches them—it is always on its way — so one fine day Conan, Earl of Richmond, went hunting in the forest near

at hand. He grew weary and hungry, and rested at the Abbey-house, where the energetic and persuasive Peter told him the tale of the misfortunes which the community had undergone.

We may presume that the Earl of Richmond had dined satisfactorily before this tale was told, for he at once presented to the monks the long, sheltered stretch of land upon which Jervaux Abbey was built; and the whole story gives a rather fine picture of those days, when danger and oppression and hard living were oddly mingled with a sort of romantic splash and splendour.

The beautiful ruins of Jervaux Abbey have been greatly mutilated by the people of the surrounding neighbourhood, who used the stones for building purposes during the ten years which followed the dissolution of the monasteries. For this reason, it is very usual to come across bits of stone carving in the walls of houses and sheds in the villages near.

The abbey was about fifty years in course of erection, and the changes in architectural

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JERVAUX ABBEY.

style which took place during that period may be easily traced by those interested in such matters.

The whole of the ground plan was buried under an accumulation of leaves and rubbish until 1805, when it was cleared by the first Marquis of Aylesbury, and at the present time affords an exceedingly clear idea of the plan of a Cistercian abbey. There are many interesting tomb-slabs, effigies, altar-stones, columns, etc., as well as a fine tesselated pavement in good condition.

The church is 270 feet long, and one altar still remains in place at the east end of the north transept.

The south doorway is a beautiful example of late Norman design, and the Chapter-house has been a noble hall which contains memorial slabs to ten abbots. The kitchen, with three enormous fireplaces, and immovable stone fenders, still testifies to the healthy appetites of the monks of Jervaux, for at least a dozen joints could be cooked in a line, while Whitaker thinks that several

spits were placed perpendicularly one above the other as well.

This is not the place to discuss the reason or unreason of that work of destruction which was concluded in 1539, but for the time being, at any rate, the demolition of Jervaux Abbey caused great distress among the poor of the surrounding villages; and that was a tragic day when Adam Sedburgh, the last abbot, watched the smoke rise above the trees about his hiding-place, and witnessed the end of another era in the ages.

A French playwright has dealt with such a moment, which is a tragedy of the soul that makes all other tragedies seem small, and I cannot advise any rambler out for sunshine and happiness to reconstruct the scene between the angry crowd and the inmates of the abbey.

The abbot came forth from his hiding-place and was given a choice of being beheaded on the spot or of joining the insurgents; he chose the latter, and missed an opportunity of dying finely, to be executed at last on Tower Hill.

Many of the great race of Fitz-Hugh are buried on this spot, and they came back from the French wars, and the Crusades, with all the glory of high romance about them, to rest in the abbey they had helped to raise, where monks sang, day after placid day, "Messe, placebo and dirge," for their departed souls.

The site of the abbey was granted by Henry VIII. to the father of Lord Darnley, the husband of Mary Queen of Scots, and has since changed hands several times, being now in the possession of the Lister family.

Those interested in wild flowers will find no less than *eighty* varieties in and round the abbey grounds. Such plants as hellebore, mallow, etc., were probably cultivated by the monks for medicinal purposes. And many others are no doubt survivors from the abbey gardens, which have spread and become semi-wild in the centuries which have elapsed since the last gardener dropped his spade and fled.

East Witton

This village is situated half-way between Jervaux Abbey and Middleham, and is surrounded by charming pastoral scenery, but it contains little of interest because it was rebuilt by the Earl of Aylesbury at the beginning of the nineteenth century.

It was once a market town, but never recovered from the Great Plague which scourged this neighbourhood in 1563.

Two springs of water may be seen above the village, on Witton Fell, which are as lovely as their names; Cast-away Well and Diana's Well; and a fine view may be obtained of the Vale of Wensley.

Cast-away Well was probably a holy well where votive offerings were made, some small article being cast into it to gratify the spirit of the well and bring luck to the thrower. Such wells were sometimes called Pin Wells, as a pin was a small, convenient offering which was constantly chosen.

Diana's Well is a beautiful spring which supplies water to the rock fountain in the

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MIDDLEHAM CASTLE.

village, which is formed out of a huge boulder stone weighing about three tons.

There is a local saying, recorded by Mr. Speight, that—

"Who ever eats Hammer nuts and drinks Diana's water
Will never leave Witton town while he's a rag or tatter."

So the rambler who is obliged to return to the office at the end of his holiday will be well advised to avoid that miraculous fare: though I should have been tempted to try it myself, if the nuts had been ripe in the Hammer Woods when I made my pilgrimage.

Middleham

This little and out-of-the-way town has a history which is as stirring as that of the Nevilles, to whom the castle belonged for so many splendid years. It came into the family upon the marriage of Mary of Middleham with Robert de Neville, Lord of Raby. She had a grandson who was the famous "Peacock of the North," so called on account of his extreme vanity, and a stone carving of

a peacock on a helmet was to be seen quite recently among the ruins of Middleham.

The Nevilles reigned as kings in the north, in everything but name, and Middleham Castle was the scene of gorgeous festivities during the occupation of Richard Neville, the King-maker. The place then echoed constantly to the clash of arms, and troops of noble guests were entertained with tournament and feasting. Some of them were prisoners, for it was during the wars of the Roses, when the centre of England seemed rather to be in Yorkshire than Middlesex.

As I stood before the walls of Middleham Castle, which remain majestic even in ruins, I thought of the pageants which had taken place among that now silent company of blackened stones, and the memory of Richard, Duke of Glo'ster, hovered like a shadow above the ancient keep.

Among all the figures of this romantic period he stands out, sinister and terrible, and it must have been a strange courtship

when he came here to woo Ann Neville. After his death on Bosworth Field the glory of the Nevilles departed, the castle being allowed to fall into disrepair. During the reign of Elizabeth, a suggestion was made that it should be pulled down, but this was not carried out, and again in the seventeenth century the Parliamentary Committee at York commanded it to be rendered untenable. In obedience to this order, the walls were partially destroyed, and immediately the inhabitants of the town began to use the stones for building purposes, as was the case at Jervaux Abbey.

The keep dates from the twelfth century, and is the oldest portion of the castle, the exterior being built by the Nevilles in the fourteenth century. It measures 210 feet by 180 feet, and a tower stands at each of the four corners.

The strength of the mortar used in building it is remarkable, for huge overhanging masses of stone are held together by it with no other support whatever, and these are said to have been in the same state for at

least two centuries, though a certain amount of restoration is now being done.

The gateway on the north side is in very good condition, and the banqueting hall and chapel may be easily recognised.

The village itself contains two old market crosses which still testify to its importance as a market town, one carved with a boar, the well-known cognisance of Richard III., being known as the Boar Cross.

So late as the nineteenth century one of the largest cattle-fairs in England was held here, and immense droves of sheep and oxen were brought from great distances. The place is still famous for horse-breeding, and the training-stables of Middleham are known all over the sporting world.

Middleham Church

This ancient and interesting church was erected somewhere about the twelfth century, but it first consisted of a simple nave, bell turret, and narrow aisles; the aisles were afterwards widened, while clerestory windows

and chancel were added to the original building.

There is a very fine tomb-slab at the west end, to the memory of Robert Thornton, twenty-second Abbot of Jervaux.

The church is dedicated to a saint who belongs to none of the Christian calendars, though another ancient church at Giggleswick is under her patronage. This St. Alkelda is supposed to have been martyred by the Danes for her fidelity to the Christian faith, and there is some stained glass in Middleham Church which depicts the saint in the act of being strangled by two unpleasant-looking females with a twisted piece of cloth. But the whole story is considered by good authorities to have been invented after the Norman Conquest, when many customs and superstitions were brought by the Breton settlers to this part of Yorkshire.

The old holy-well, near which St. Alkelda is supposed to have lived, is in a field quite near to the church, and is now covered in, the water being conveyed by a pipe to the roadside below, where pilgrims who still

believe in its efficacy as a cure for weak eyes may sit and soak with the least possible effort.

As both poets and novelists have written about Middleham, those who wish to read a further description of it should close this simple account, and take up Lytton's *Last of the Barons*, which conveys all that Middleham once stood for in feudal England—though it has been hinted that the writer himself never saw the place but with the eyes of his imagination.

CHAPTER X

BEDALE

When that most observant rambler, old Leland, wrote down his impressions of these dales, he says that Bedale was at that time—the reign of Henry VIII.—"a faire market towne second only to Richmond."

It has declined since then, but is still charmingly situated in the midst of the fertile valley to which it owes its name—the Bethaland or Begadale—that is, the beautiful dale.

Mr. Bogg, who possesses a wonderful fund of knowledge of the Yorkshire Dales, tells us that an old writer has described Bedale fairs as being celebrated for the sale of horned cattle, sheep, horses, pewter, and, finally, milliners' goods. He then quotes an old rhyme which shows that the ladies of

this neighbourhood did justice to the celebrated millinery, for—

> "Bedale bonnets and Bedale faces
> Find nowt to beat 'em in any places."

It seems appropriate that Bedale, which goes back to Celtic times as an inhabited town, should be the centre of a famous hunting and horse-breeding district, and the sporting instinct which is so strong in the true Yorkshireman is here the main source of profit and pleasure.

But it really seems as if this fine instinct had gained a little too much the upper hand when Sir Arthur Darcy suggested to Henry VIII. that the suppressed Abbey of Jervaux would make an excellent horse-breeding establishment.

However, the Bedale Hunt, which was started in 1832, continues to be one of the finest and best managed in the country, and testifies to the fact that the men of this district still deserve the name of "Venmen" or "Sport-lovers," which they held in the days of the ubiquitous Leland.

Those who run after the hounds on foot are no less keen than those who ride, and in my own neighbourhood there is a cobbler who turns out in hunting costume to follow the hounds on "shanks' pony," and has done so for many years.

Somebody said the other day in my hearing that he was a foolish old man to neglect his last for the sake of running somewhere where there was nothing to get, and that was no doubt a sensible point of view; but the speaker did not know that glory of the chase which is an end in itself, and has nothing to do with the prize captured.

Bedale sleeps now all the week excepting on market-days, and those who wish to forget that the telephone has been invented cannot do better than to spend a little time slumbering in company with the grey houses and quiet streets.

A castle with a massive central tower once stood in Bedale; and Brian of Bedale was a famous knight who died in 1306. A letter written by him is still preserved in the Record Office, but practically all traces of

the residence from which he dated that letter have disappeared. Whitaker says, however, that it stood "with no advantage of situation, a little south-west of the church steeple." The foundations have been traced to a considerable extent in a field north-west of the church.

Another historic figure connected with this place is Miles Stapylton of Bedale, who fought in the great tournament at Windsor, and was a friend of the Black Prince. The burial-place of this family is on the north-east side of the church, but there are other memorials of the Stapyltons at Wighill.

The Church of St. Gregorius itself has a very fine tower, which appears to have been originally built as a place of refuge for the townspeople when the Scots raided the country, as often happened during the reign of Edward II. It was added to the original church about this time, and the upper storeys are reached by a spiral staircase which used to be protected by a portcullis. The tower had four storeys, the first being the priest's chamber.

In the nave are fine monuments of the famous Brian Fitz-Alan and his lady. The knight is represented in chain armour with sword and shield, and a lion at his feet. The lady is crowned with oak-leaves, which means strength and virtue, and has a hound at her feet signifying fidelity. Both figures are finely symbolical in every detail, affording real pleasure to the rambler who has time to linger for awhile in this interesting old church.

The two figures at the south abutment of the tower arch are knights in plate armour, which was the fashion of a later period than chain armour, and in the north wall of St. George's aisle under a recessed arch is the tomb of a priest, supposed to be Brian of Thornhill.

The interior of the church is unusual in general appearance, the arches of the arcade which separates the north aisle from the nave being ornamented with the dog's tooth and ball-flower design.

The crypt under the east end of the church originally contained relics of Saints, but now it is only used as a burial-place for the Lords

of the Manor. I am quoting this piece of information, which sounds a little invidious, put so; but it is merely a statement of plain fact, and no reflection at all upon the greatly respected family who rest in the tombs of black and white marble.

The church has been rebuilt and restored so often since that early Saxon time, when it was probably an erection of mud and wattles, that only a few fragments of the later Saxon stonework now remain, and very little trace of Norman influence is to be found. There are, however, many examples of fourteenth, and fifteenth, and sixteenth century architecture.

In former times the wedding-races, which are mentioned by all students of old Yorkshire customs, were run in Bedale from the church tower to the Market Cross. Men only took part in them, and the prize consisted usually of the bride's garter, which was worked elaborately for that purpose.

When the bride was crossing the threshold of her new home for the first time, the winner barred the way on his knees, and claimed the privilege of taking the prize. The bride then

lifted her skirt, while the garter was removed amid the laughter and applause of the wedding guests.

There is an old rhyme which refers to the embroidering of these garters, which runs somewhat as follows, though the original is in a dialect too broad for the ordinary reader to comprehend easily—

"Blushing, there our Peggy sits
Stitching, fine stitching,
Love-knots round her bridal bands,
Witching, bewitching.
The bridesmaids all must do a stitch,
Stitching, fine stitching,
And thou must bind it round her leg,
Witching, bewitching."

And there is also a wedding song about the same custom, which was intended to be sung by bachelor friends on the night before the wedding. It celebrates the charms of Nance, who is leaving many lads forlorn—

"But cheer up, lads, your glasses fill,
For every Jack there is a Jill.
Sup up, my bucks, and never spill,
And may I win her garter O."

In some places ribbons or even coloured handkerchiefs took the place of the actual

garter, but the custom has now altogether died out in the dales, though it was observed less than twenty years ago, as we are told by Mr. Blakeborough, to whose excellent book I am greatly indebted, and in which I found the rhymes I have quoted here.

However, I must return to the Market Cross, whence I started upon this ramble in the good old times.

Bedale, as it exists at present, affords only another example of that decay which has fallen upon the market-towns of England, each of which was at one time the centre of a rural neighbourhood, able to make a social life for itself, and having trades, industries, and local institutions which were self-supporting and self-sufficing.

But it is still a beautiful old place, with the tender charm of the past about its alleyways and uneven roofs, and the circle of the quiet fields beyond the town.

Kilgram Bridge

The walk or drive of a mile and a half from Bedale to Kilgram Bridge is very

picturesque, with undulating scenery and charming villages on the way. Birrell has a pleasant manor-house standing among the trees, and a little farther on is a Jacobean Hall, which was built in the sixteenth century, and which King James is supposed to have visited.

Clifton Castle lies to the south about a mile away, but there is now nothing to be seen of the original building but a fragment of the wall of the courtyard.

There is a legend connected with Kilgram Bridge and the devil which affords another example of those tales that so delighted the mediæval mind, in which the "owd lad" is "bested" at last by the sharpness of his opponent.

The story goes that the devil, who hates bridges over running water, permitted this one to be built on condition that he should be allowed to claim the soul of the first to walk across it. That seemed a long way off to the good people of the neighbourhood, so they built strongly and well, and trusted to luck. But at last the bridge was finished,

just as you see it to-day, and yet nobody dared use it. Then a shepherd, possessing a dog named Grim that could not swim, took off his shoes and swam the river, while poor "Grim" padded faithfully after him across three of the arches and then disappeared—a vicarious sacrifice to the powers of darkness.

Yorkshire people who are also dog-lovers may be loth to believe this tale of a Yorkshire shepherd and his dog, but the Bridge of Kilgram is still there, unmolested by the devil, to witness if I lie.

However, the sceptical who refuse to believe that story may still perhaps be interested to remember that this bridge was watched day and night during the terrible time of the cattle plague in the middle of the eighteenth century. At that period all farmers suffered immense losses, in spite of the fact that owners of destroyed animals were given compensation.

Thornton-le-Steward

This parish, which is entered immediately on crossing the bridge, was once the property

of the Stewards of the Earls of Richmond. It is built on an open situation on the brow of a hill, and is a very bracing and healthy spot. The views over the vale of Jervaux and Witton Woods are delightful, and there is a little church isolated from the village, as is so often the case with old churches in this part of the world.

This Church of St. Oswald is mentioned in Domesday as existing in 1086, and no doubt occupies the site of a still more ancient one founded by Paulinus when on his famous mission to Wensleydale and Swaledale before mentioned.

The absolute simplicity of the interior is very impressive; it must be a happy and reposeful thing to look through the clear east window and watch the sky changing with the afterglow on summer Sunday evenings, remembering the generations who have worshipped there. Very many may not have understood, and thousands must have come because they feared that ill-luck or the devil would get them if they stayed away; but enough have prayed in humble

faith to leave about the little old building that indefinable, indescribable atmosphere which is the fragrance of past holiness.

Snape Castle

There is a high road leading to this place, but by far the most pleasant way is across the fields from Bedale, passing through Firby, which well deserves its ancient name of Fridebi—the "peaceful place." I cannot refrain from mentioning once more the beautiful and simple appropriateness of these names, which would afford sufficient interest in themselves for a whole ramble, and about which a most charming little book might be written.

Firby Hall is finely situated, and Firby Hospital, which is a home for six old men, has a sixteenth-century chapel.

The path continues through lovely rural country and under an avenue of magnificent trees to Snape.

The castle came into the Neville family

by the marriage of Robert de Neville to Mary of Middleham, and the front of it, restored by the Latimers, is now used as a farmhouse. The chapel has also been restored after a long period of neglect, and possesses fine carved work and a decorated ceiling.

It is locally supposed that Katherine Parr was here married to her fourth husband, Lord Latimer.

Snape itself was a prosperous, bustling place sixty years ago, but the day of the little country town is as surely past as that of the feudal castle, and it is now a sleepy, straggling village with a decreasing population.

Well

This village is about four miles south of Bedale, and it, also, is mentioned in Domesday as possessing a church, and is one of the most picturesque villages in the dales.

The beck of clear running water to which the place owes its name takes its course

down the village street, and every one in Well must eat and drink and sleep to the gay tune of those really "laughing waters." It might fitly be called the little town of many bridges, because so many thresholds are, in fact, stone bridges with the beck flowing underneath. The great Nevilles have left another trace of their presence here, for Well Hall was no doubt built by Ralph Neville in 1342. It is now a farmhouse with a magnificent vaulted roof, which testifies to its former importance.

The church bears traces of both Saxon and Norman architecture. A Roman pavement is to be seen in the chancel, and an old stone altar let into the oak altar of 1530. Here, also, is the tomb of Margery de Neville, 1331, with sword, cross, and incense-holder carved upon it. The ancient vesper-bell gable is over the east end of the nave.

Burniston

This old-world village was a place of importance in the reign of Edward the

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A STILE IN THE SUNSET.

Confessor, being second only to Catterick, and the Church of St. Lambert was rebuilt in the fifteenth century. It has fine black-oak pews, dating from 1627, and a beautiful screen. In the churchyard is another testimonial to the fine properties of the Yorkshire air, in the grave of John Kirkby, aged a hundred and five years.

A notorious character also buried here is Thomas, who thought he was the Messiah, and dressed in a white smock-frock with a scarf and ribbons. He also wore a tin star, and one of paper pasted on looking-glass, upon his breast, and at times adorned himself with wings. In this guise he attended markets, fairs, and feasts, and stalked through the villages on his way in grand style, refusing to speak to any one.

It would be possible to continue almost endlessly describing the rural beauty and historic interest of these little villages which are scattered up and down the dales, but ramblers who have time to study them will find them easily enough, I hope, with the

information I have been able to give; while those who are obliged to hurry more than they would wish must perforce leave the more out-of-the-way corners to be explored at some future time.

CHAPTER XI

DANBY HALL

The Nevilles and the Scropes dominated this part of Yorkshire for so long that memorials to their greatness are to be found everywhere, and Danby Hall is another historic house built by the family who erected Bolton Castle. It is situated above the river Yore, and the front faces eastwards, in the direction of Jervaux Abbey.

The south end as well as the two spiral towers were built quite recently, but the west side dates from the time of Queen Elizabeth. The square tower at the north-east corner was originally, as Mr. Bogg states, a single peel-tower, and was erected as a place of refuge during the raids of the Scots Borderers in the fourteenth and fifteen centuries.

The interior is very stately and beautiful,

according well both with the exterior of the house and the traditions of the family. It is very easy to imagine fine ladies and noble gentlemen going up and down the great oaken staircase with the coloured light falling upon them through their armorial bearings in the window. The days when people tried to appear what they wanted to be considered were stupid and artificial, no doubt, but they had their advantages, and there was something, after all, in being a duke, when you really looked one too.

In the dining-room is a mantelpiece dating from the Stuart period, and the walls are, or were recently, adorned with many fine portraits of the family ancestors, including the famous Lord Scrope of Flodden Field and his lady, and their son John, who went on the Pilgrimage of Grace.

The Scropes remained faithful to the ancient faith, and there is a small room in the tower where services were secretly held by a resident priest during times of persecution.

A Roman Catholic Chapel existed formerly

in a field called Chapel Garth, where the foundations are still to be seen, and a short walk past Danby Mill leads to a bridge, which is mentioned in the will of the famous Ralph Neville in the fifteenth century.

Penhill

Before leaving the "green vale of Wensley" the real rambler would do well to make a distinct and separate pilgrimage to the mountain of the district called Penhill. The view from the summit is magnificent, overlooking an immense expanse of village, wood, and dale, and on a clear day about sixty churches can be distinguished, most of which contain something of historic interest.

In former days this summit was used as a beacon in time of war, and it was thus employed at the time of the Spanish Armada.

Another story in connection with it which goes to prove that the invasion scare is no new thing; not that there is anything wonderful in that, for that oldness of what we think new, is the continual lesson taught by

any travel among the relics of the past, but it is often considered that the national "jumpiness" is a product of modern conditions.

Anyway, during the time of the great Napoleon, the good volunteers of Wensleydale drank their ale and ate their cheese with one eye upon the Penhill Beacon, the lighting of which was to be a signal to them to muster and march to Thirsk.

One clear night, the watchman talked with his cronies at Market Cross in the village about the awful things which would happen in case of an invasion, and then climbed up to his lonely place by the piled-up brushwood.

As he sat there, he felt the old terror of invasion, which has been handed down in Yorkshire from those far-off times which seem to have been forgotten, and which yet live on in the instincts of a people. Strange echoes sound through almost every word that is spoken, for the speech of the invader has been branded upon the tongues of Yorkshiremen, and though they have come to regard

the mixed language as their national language, there lurks, deep-hidden, too deep for thought, the resentment of the conquered.

All this went through the watchman's soul, though he merely thought he was wondering if "Boney" had landed, and when, far off in the direction of Roseberry Topping Beacon, he saw a light flare up, he felt something within him which was not the stirring of his fear, but the instinctive terror of countless generations.

He lighted the beacon, and a moment later a great flame rose up beside him, roaring to the sky. The same feeling he had known thrilled all the dales—they were not afraid of any man, but they were afraid of a terror long forgotten.

So they kissed their wives and buckled on their swords, and away they went to death or glory.

Then came the anticlimax. When they reached Thirsk it was found that the supposed alarm on Roseberry Topping had been a rick fire, or some accident of that kind, and that "Boney" was still safely on

the other side of the Channel. However, these good men and true had proved their readiness to defend their country, and were very properly thanked by Parliament for their promptitude.

On the side of Penhill which faces Bolton Castle, above the Temple Farm, near Swinethaite, are the remains of the Chapel of the Knights Templars.

It seems very strange that this great Order should have established a hospital there soon after 1146, when it was first instituted in England, and no very good reason has been suggested for the choice of such a remote and, at that time, inaccessible locality.

The Templars were aided by the great families in the neighbourhood, and soon acquired property all over Wensleydale. The exact date of the building of the chapel is not known, but a grant was made early in the thirteenth century for the purpose of keeping a light burning perpetually in the Temple at Penhill.

It was dedicated to God, the Virgin, and St. Catharine. St. Catharine was thus

honoured because she was the ancient patron saint of the linen weavers, and her favour was of importance to the Templars because their garments were chiefly composed of this material. So it really does seem as if, in their dedication, they had tried to make things pleasant all round.

But the strange romance and chivalry which set fire to men's souls, and made the Knights Templars found a hospice on Penhill, soon died down in the routine of everyday life on a bleak Yorkshire upland. Misfortunes came upon them from without, and many unfounded charges were brought against them. Twenty of their number were imprisoned at York, and the house and chapel at Penhill became the property of the Crown.

There is very little to be seen now of the original buildings, but the ruins which remain show that the chapel was 58 feet long and 21 wide. There are several stone coffins and a doorway on the south side, the step of which is worn by the feet of pilgrims who halted there for shelter on their

way through the wild moor and the Forest of Wensleydale.

An ancient inscription bidding welcome to wayfarers is to be seen over the doorway of the farmhouse near; it runs as follows :—

"Whoso that cometh to this hous O Lord do them protect and who doth pas forth of the same Jesu there waye derect."

It is dated 1608, and at that time there was need enough to pray for the safety of travellers in Wensleydale, for tales of lost pedlars and benighted shepherds still linger about the Yorkshire village ale-houses, when old men's tongues are loosened and they talk of the days when all the world was young.

R. Falconer Jameson.]

THE MARKET-PLACE OF BARNARD CASTLE.

CHAPTER XII

TEESDALE

From Richmond to Barnard Castle is a pleasant drive of seventeen miles through lovely scenery, but those who go from Wensleydale to Teesdale must either motor or take train *via* Northallerton. In any case, the journey is a simple one, and it is a pity to return without having seen the third in this trio of northern dales, though it cannot be said to lie strictly in Yorkshire. The river Tees, of course, forms the boundary line between two counties, and Barnard Castle itself is on the Durham side.

I entered the town from the railway station, a long road reaching to a large market-place. It was a market-day, and the fine, open space was filled with carts and old-fashioned gigs and vehicles of all

kinds, while the streets were thronged with fresh-complexioned farmers and farmers' wives and daughters, who greeted each other on the pavement with the jolly friendliness of those who live in remote places, and who find in "market-day" what some people look for in a London season.

There were young men in their best clothes making sheepish remarks to flower-faced girls in coats and skirts of every colour in the rainbow—older men joked with capable farmers' wives, who possessed, nearly all of them, the fine dignity which comes from having a place in the world and filling it well—and through all other sounds came that constant chorus of the weather which enters into every conversation, and no wonder, for on that the prosperity of the whole dale depends.

The rambler who has come away for a change of mind cannot get farther away from the artificial conditions under which so many of us must live, than by mingling, as my companion and I did, with

the crowd on a Barnard Castle market-day, and listening to talk about the unchanging things that must always matter to the human race.

At the bottom of the market-place is the octagonal Town Hall, where butter, eggs, poultry, etc., are sold every Wednesday, and on the summit of this building is a cupola with a vane which was perforated by the marksmen from a distance of a hundred yards in 1804. The hall was erected in the eighteenth century by a native of the town at his own expense. But in spite of the happy impression I received of Barnard Castle as the centre of a great rural population, I would still advise the rambler who has time to really ramble, and thinks an emotion worth some trouble, to approach the place on foot by the bank of the river. For the view of the castle is beautiful beyond description when seen from the river-bank, with the clear reaches of still water reflecting tower and trees, and old roofs of the town beyond. But the charm of the view depends a good

deal on its being seen from the right spot.

The castle was built in the twelfth century by Bernard Baliol on land that had been given to his father by William Rufus, and was called by the Christian name of the founder. In those turbulent times the people of the surrounding dale were glad to gather together, and built houses under the protection of what is still to be recognised as a strong and noble fortress, and a very ancient document granting privileges to the town is still kept in the Town Hall.

As old Leland says, "Castle Barnard standeth stately upon Tees," and the fineness and grandeur of this ancient stronghold cannot be more fitly put into words. No wonder that Alexander of Scotland cast envious eyes upon it and "surveid it about, to espie whether it was assailable of any side."

There is one member of the original owner's family to whom many generations of undergraduates have cause to be grateful, and that is John Baliol, the founder of

[A. H. Robinson.

Barnard Castle.

ILLINOIS

Baliol College, Oxford, who lived here in the thirteenth century.

Eventually the castle passed into the hands of the ubiquitous Nevilles, and thence into the possession of the Crown, during which latter period it was besieged for eleven days by Sir George Bowes against the Earls of Westmoreland and Northumberland, two leaders of the "Rising of the North." The rebels twice tried to scale the wall, but were repulsed with loss, and then retired to a distance, where they invited Sir George Bowes and his men to come out and fight on open ground. The rude rhyme which the soldiers used at the time is still remembered in this part of the world, and runs as follows:—

"Coward, a coward o' Barney Cassel
Daren't come out to fight a battle."

But even this taunt failed to bring forth Sir George Bowes with his small garrison to risk such an unequal encounter, and it was only want of water which compelled him at last to surrender.

The castle is in ruins, but the four courts are still to be seen, enclosing six and three-quarter acres, and when I went there in the sunny stillness of one July morning, and found the place so alone and silent with the lights and shadows from the great walls on the fresh green grass, I saw also the shadows of the past more plainly than I had ever done in my life before, save once, when I was a child of eleven at Haddon Hall.

And when I climbed up to the little oriel window in the great wall overlooking the Tees, and sat under the boar which still marks Richard III.'s residence there, I felt that he had looked out there, too, as he thought the wild and burning thoughts which led him on to such desperate deeds. I wondered if the loveliness outside had laid for a moment the hand of peace on him, as it did on me, and then I came down again, wishing rest to his soul.

The great tower is about 50 feet high and 150 feet above the river, and is called Baliol's Tower; it has a first floor with a vaulted roof of unusual design. The

R. Falconer Jameson.]

AN ARCHWAY IN BARNARD CASTLE.

other—Brackenbury's Tower—was at one time used as a dungeon, and has a large arched vault with cells and an opening at the top for letting down provisions, and it seems almost incredible in these humanitarian days that a comparatively short time only has elapsed since human beings were herded together in this dreadful den without light or air or hope of mercy.

But as I walked on the quiet grass in the roofless courts, and dreamed, as I did in Wensleydale and Swaledale, to the clear sound of running water, I could see that this must once have been a place where dreams might easily grow until they were great enough even to reach a throne.

Before leaving the castle I climbed the ramparts and looked across the woods and the river to the west, where in the far distance rise Micklefell and Crossfell, while on the east is a lovely expanse of broken rural scenery.

The way back to the town leads through the back premises of the King's Head Inn, where Dickens stayed when he was writing

the principal part of *Nicholas Nickleby*, and I paused that sunny morning in the old coachyard, where only a stray dog and a stray motor remained to take the place of all the bustle and activity of long ago. I knew, then, if I had never realised it before, that, noisy and jolly though the scene might have been in those days, it never was so jolly as a Dickens' novel. For the great writer got all there was, but he also put something into his description that never was—and that is the magic of his own outlook.

When I went indoors I saw the old part of the inn where so many generations of Yorkshiremen had sat, drinking good ale and making good bargains on a market-day, and then I wandered upstairs to the room where Dickens had sought a refuge from domestic unrest and from the restlessness of his own storm-driven nature. He had been a wanderer on the world's highway so young that he remained at heart always a wanderer—he could give peace and quiet happiness of mind in a degree unequalled, but he could never find it.

LINGTO

A. Sweeten.]

DICKENS' ROOM AT THE KING'S HEAD.

I looked at the chair and table he had used, and my love for him, which has been as real as my love for any living friend nearly all my life, became a more near and intimate thing than it ever was before. It was as if I had seen for a moment into his heart as he sat there, staring at the clock-makers' shop opposite, which gave him the idea for Master Humphrey's clock.

I paid my homage, in that room, to the great realist who never shirked the necessary mention of pain or shame or suffering, but who had no need to describe the dunghill under the dead leaves in order to make the dead leaves real.

And no greater testimony to this quality could be needed than that given by a fairly well-educated woman at Barnard Castle, who told me that a man called Nicholas Nickleby once lived at Bowes, and that I could read all about him in a book by Dickens. She was quite sure that the hero of that novel had once existed in the flesh, and that the great novelist had only chronicled a series of real events.

There is a very quaint old building just beyond the Horsemarket called "Blaegroves," which is now let in tenements, but it contains some specimens of oak-carving, and Oliver Cromwell is supposed to have stayed in it on his way to Richmond.

The walks by the river are very delightful, and are accessible to the rambler on both sides of the water, the old Abbey Bridge forming a most exquisite feature of the landscape. No wonder that Scott was inspired to describe this scene, to which only a great poet could do justice.

The Flatts Wood here is comprised within Marwood Chase, the old park belonging to the castle, and the oak trees are of very great antiquity. Farther along the riverside is the Rock Walk, with a platform at the top of some stone steps, whence a fine view is to be seen.

Another ramble near the town is the Cleveland Walk, which leads past. a small waterfall to Harmire Bridge.

The Bowes Museum should also be visited, not only because of the interesting

A. Sweeten.]

PERCY BECK BRIDGE.

ON PUBLIC

collection of exhibits contained in it, but also because of the romantic idea which made two real ramblers — Mr. Bowes and the Countess of Montalbo, his wife—bring home the fruits of all their journeyings to this remote corner of Yorkshire. They had lived chiefly in France, and first intended to build a museum at Calais, but abandoned this idea owing to the permanently unsettled state of politics in that country, and decided upon Barnard Castle, as being a town with which Mr. Bowes' ancestors had been connected for many centuries.

The Countess was much younger than Mr. Bowes and expected to outlive him, so she made arrangements to live in the Museum after his death, and to devote the remainder of her days to the work of arranging the treasures which she and her husband had gathered together.

However, she was the first to go, and the enormous expenses connected with carrying out the original plan, and a decline in the colliery trade, caused Mr. Bowes to eventually stop building, but he so arranged his

affairs that at last, twenty years after his death, all prior claims on the estate were discharged and the Museum received its splendid endowment in full.

The cataloguing of such a collection, picked up for pleasure, and often with no definite notes of either time, place, or price, is of course very difficult; but it is nice to think that this Yorkshire rambler and his wife sleep peacefully in the private chapel at Gillside—their dream fulfilled.

And now the voices of happy children rise, day after day, from the beautiful gardens round the Museum building; surely those ramblers who gave it could have no sweeter requiem.

CHAPTER XIII

ROUND BARNARD CASTLE

The country between Barnard Castle and High Force is very varied, and the scenery on the upper course of the Tees is wild and fine, constantly falling down little terraces of rock, one below the other, until it reaches a pool where the frothy waters wash round with a deep sound which can be heard a long way off.

The road grows more treeless and wild as it ascends, and on the Yorkshire side is the vast expanse of Stainmore, a waste of ling and heather, which was haunted by the fiercest outlaws in the north for many generations.

No wonder that it was haunted by all sorts of weird legends as well, and until quite recently the strange superstition of the Hand of Glory existed in that neigh-

bourhood. It was once firmly believed in many parts of Europe, and Sir Walter Scott may have heard it here, as he mentions it in one of his books.

The Hand of Glory was to be taken from a man who had been hanged and then prepared in a gruesome manner, so gruesome that I really must leave the curious rambler to read it for himself in the annals of the Folk-Lore Society. If properly used it renders those approached incapable of motion, as though dead, and was therefore a valuable part of a robber's outfit in those stirring days.

But the point is this, that one evening about the year 1790, a woman arrived at the old Spital Inn on Bowes Moor, the dreary region across which the wind rushed to freeze poor Nicholas Nickleby at the pump of Dotheboys Hall. This traveller begged to stay the night, but she wished to depart very early in the morning, and asked that no one should be disturbed to let her out. The people of the inn, however, thought the maid-servant had better sit up in case there were murder or robbery in the wind.

Then they went comfortably to bed. For innkeepers were not nervous in those days on the moorside.

The maid also composed herself to slumber on the settle, for, evidently, she was not nervous either. But just before finally shutting her eyes she chanced to glance across at the traveller, *and she saw a pair of trousers peeping out from beneath the skirt.*

That did rather startle her: still, with immense self-control, she at once began to snore loudly. But she kept one eye slightly open and saw the traveller take out of his pocket a dead hand, light a candle, put in the dead hand and say, in a solemn voice: "Let those be asleep who are asleep, and let those be awake who are awake."

Then he whistled to his companions outside, and went to let them in, leaving the candle lighted on the table.

The maid jumped up from the settle and ran to try and wake the family, who were obviously about to be murdered in their beds. She shook. She shouted. All in vain. The Hand of Glory had done its

work only too well. They lay as if dead. And the outlaws could be plainly heard outside. The poor girl was really nervous at last.

Then she suddenly remembered the old superstition about the Hand of Glory, and knew she saw it now in operation. If she could only put out the candle, all the sleepers would awake. With wonderful forethought, not trusting her failing wind, she caught up a bowl of milk from the dairy as she passed, and flung it over the dead hand and the candle. Instantly the household was awake, and the landlord's son fired amongst the robbers from the window; but they escaped.

It is quite true. It must have been quite true, for in the morning the bloodstains were traced to a considerable distance, and the Folk-Lore Society has thought the tale worthy of recording.

Only the twentieth-century rambler cannot help wondering if the maid-servant's imagination may not possibly have been as strong as her nerves.

However, there is no doubt that murder

and robbery were common enough in this remote district up to fairly recent times, and that the strange tales which still linger about the old inns and wind-swept farmhouses are founded on solid fact.

Stainmore has held this reputation, indeed, since those stirring times when criminals of all sorts used to flee across it from Leyburn and Richmond and other places in the dales to the sanctuary of St. Cuthbert at Durham. It is recorded that a fugitive rang the bell of the sanctuary on 10th October 1487, and claimed protection there after having murdered a man on Stainmoor.

The editor of the old Sanctuary Book at Durham also relates that in his childhood the ghost of a priest in rustling silk robes used to walk by the place where he is said to have been murdered in 1485—so long did these legends live in these northern moors before steam and electricity came to frighten them away.

But there is nothing to fear now; outlaws, murderers, valiant inn-maids, and ghostly victors have all skurried back to the hiding-

places in the past whence, for a moment, I have dragged them forth, and my companion and I sit on a sunny bank eating sandwiches and drinking tea from a thermos flask, glad, after all, to have safety at the price of romance.

Cotherston

This is a village which has already learned to cater for the summer visitor, and new dwellings and places of worship stand side by side with the old houses which stood when ramblers such as old Leland came adventuring once in generations, and when nobody dreamed of a yearly holiday being a necessity for the million.

The Red Lion Inn, however, belongs to the old times, and bears the inscription T. H., 1738, over the doorway.

Across the road from the inn there is a path leading across the school-yard to the Hagg, which is a sort of grass-grown amphitheatre surmounted by a ruined fragment of a castle, once the seat of the Fitz-Hughs,

Lords of Ronaldskirk. It seems probable that the curious formation of the ground near is owing to certain fortifications which existed on the less protected side of the castle.

A short distance away is Balder Bridge, where it is possible to ascend the parapet by stone steps in the wall and to thus obtain a charming view of the river and the old mill which is, or was when I saw it, no longer in use.

There is something sad in this inevitable decay of an ancient calling, for it was a good life, full of the joyous realities, and worth living. There can, after all, be nothing finer than to live amid beautiful surroundings like this, and to supply the primal needs of common humanity, and to lie down at last with the day's work well done.

No wonder the old time millers were notoriously jolly; they had learned, without knowing it, the whole art of living.

Beyond the mill, the river Balder breaks joyously into a series of little cascades which flash and sing in the sunlight, and as I listen to them I know how Jacob felt when

he wanted to build an altar where he had slept. I, too, wanted to build—or rather to restore.

"How splendid it would be," I said to my companion, "if we could live here, and make wholesome stone-ground flour, and bake bread—*real* things——"

"What about getting up at four o'clock on a winter's morning to make the bread—and finding that everybody wanted roller-ground flour?" said my companion.

So I turned away from it all and trudged on towards the Fairy Cupboards.

"I wonder what you would do if you hadn't some one to look after you?" said my companion, breaking a silence.

I shook my head—but I had the grace to be thankful in my heart for a good companion, for nearly all the joy of any journeying must lie in that.

The next point of interest on the way is Percymire Rock, which is on the Durham side of the Tees, and with which is connected a legend of the Fitz-Hughs. He was a mighty hunter, and was about to ride forth as usual

one morning, when an old woman came to the castle gate, begging him to stay at home because she had dreamed that some great danger would befall him. He laughed at her and rode on, full of life, with his hawk on his wrist, but he came back dead, for he had ridden in the dusk of the evening over Percymire Rock, and horse and rider perished in the Tees below. So ended the last of the Fitz-Hughs, and it must be owned that legend has provided this ancient race with a dramatic exit.

A walk beside flowery banks and through a wood brought us to the Fairy Cupboards, which are beautifully named for what they are, as so often happens in these dales, and which somehow seems to give an added loveliness to these curious little rock caverns with rounded pillars where fairies indeed might have been thought to live. The green of the trees, and the sunshine, and the splash of the water as it breaks over the stones in mid-stream, all combine to make something very delightful of these Cupboards, which Nature has been hollowing out during thou-

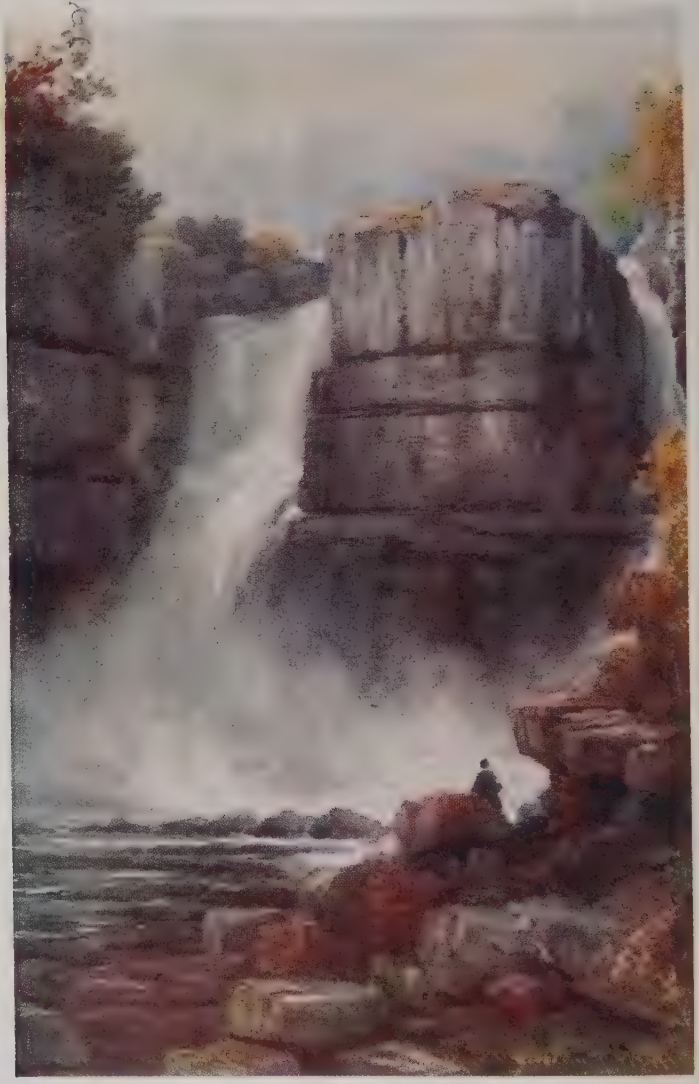
sands of years, for a fairy tale to live in at last.

In Cotherston itself there still exists the Court Leets and Baron, a very old custom which no doubt had its origin in feudal times, and the summons to which runs as follows :—

"When and where all persons who owe suit and service to the said Courts respectively are personally to be and appear at the Court Leets and Baron, then and there to perform their suits and services."

Cotherston cheeses are considered very excellent, and there used at one time to be a rivalry between the cheese-makers of Cotherston and those of Ronaldskirk, which is a village about two miles away, where an old church is the chief object of interest.

It is dedicated to St. Ronald, and dates from the twelfth century, and those who are interested in architecture will be able to trace the additions and alterations which have been made since that time. At the west end of the church is an old carved font, and in the chancel is the tomb of Sir Henry Fitz-Hugh.



[PHOTOCHROM CO.

High Force, Teesdale.

He is represented as a Crusader with mail armour, sword and shield, and was buried here in 1304. But how little the Prior of Guiseborough, who laid him here to rest, could ever have dreamed of a world in which the tomb of the great Fitz-Hughs would be sought for by a chance rambler behind an organ.

Middleton-in-Teesdale

The old town lying in a wooded hollow forms a pleasant centre for those who wish to explore the dale, and new houses are being built to supply suitable accommodation for tourists. It was at one time the centre of the lead-mining industry in this district, and has a population of about two thousand.

High Force

The familiar sound of the river which had been gathering strength all the way from Middleton becomes louder still opposite the High Force Hotel, and just through a gate,

a few feet from the main road, the falls come suddenly into view between the trees. The situation of this famous cascade lends it a beauty which is really far greater than its actual height could account for, and very few waterfalls in the world give such an impression of wild grandeur as High Force when it chances to be in full flood in summer-time. The strong light and shadow, the skyline of barren moor, the colour of the water, which is black in the deep shadow and flashes up the wonderful colour-scale of these dale rivers to gold and golden-white; the glittering freshness of the day—these make a whole which the rambler must keep as a delightful memory when many other things are forgotten.

Cauldron Snout

This is an expedition which cannot easily be taken by those who are not fairly good walkers, for though my companion and I saw a motor going along the rough road from the little inn at Langdon Beck to the falls,

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CAULDRON SNOUT.

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we felt that both car and occupants must have been unusually strongly put together to stand the jolting they obviously received. But to those who do not mind a rather rough walk it is well worth while. There is a wildness, and grandeur, and loneliness about this spot which makes all those strange old tales about the past seem possible and true, and when I saw a man riding up against the skyline on a black horse, I half expected him to take out a pistol and demand my thermos flask or my life.

Even when he had gone harmlessly by with a quiet, civil "Good morning," I still looked after him as he rode away. I felt it impossible that he could just be going down to the village to buy groceries.

And indeed the road beneath the bleak range of Falcon Flints would form a fitting background to any wild romance, and at Cauldron Snout itself the river roars and foams down a series of inclines in the mad tumult which has earned for it the fitting name of a cauldron.

CHAPTER XIV

TEESDALE

Bowes

I do not quite know what I expected to see when I went, like a pious pilgrim, to visit this village in which Dickens placed the scene of the Yorkshire school in *Nicholas Nickleby*; but it was something quite different from what I did see when I walked down the long grey street of Bowes. And now I have been there and come away again the picture of that vague, wild, wind-swept place that my imagination knew for so many years from childhood on, is much more real to me than the memory of the actual village.

The very inn, though it is the one where Dickens stayed in the days when the inn parlour was a club, is only a pale reflection of an inn—it has none of the splendour and jollity he found there; while Dotheboys

A. Sweeten.

DOTHEBOYS HALL.

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Hall itself, tricked out with bow-windows and clean curtains and a well-kept garden, is one of the disillusionments of my life. For 'Tilda Squeers and her friend could never have had that lovely party behind those shining window panes, and Mrs. Squeers never walked down that trim garden path, and it was all a "make up" from beginning to end.

I felt bitterly disappointed as I stood there and exchanged a few words with an inhabitant of Bowes, who told me that there were at least three Yorkshire schools in the place at the time when Dickens visited it, and that Mr. Squeers, so far from being an ogre, was better than the average Yorkshire schoolmaster of his time. And it is undoubtedly hard on him—I was obliged to see it for myself—that he should have had his unfortunate personal appearance handed down to posterity with a character to match.

Taking these things into consideration it is not surprising that the descendants of this gentleman, who still reside in the house, should intensely resent the presence of the pious pilgrim. Any way, one does under-

stand that they would not welcome intruders into their back yard, where at last I found something which seemed real. For the pump, at least, stands exposed to the keen blast from the dreary moor, just as it did when Nicholas tried to wash there in the freezing morning, and I began to feel again that Dotheboys Hall, and Tilda, and Miss Price, are all true after all—I could go on believing in them.

The village of Bowes was known to the Romans, and the flagged roofs and bleak aspect of the place give some idea of the conditions which have created a fine, enduring race of people.

There still remain some ruins of a Norman castle here, which was built by the Earls of Richmond and on the site of a Roman stronghold. The walls are twelve feet thick in some parts, with arrow slits for bowmen. The church is quite near to the castle, and it contains many interesting relics of the Roman occupation and of the Middle Ages, when religion was such a fiercely vital thing to the people of these northern dales.

A. Sweeten.]

EGLISTONE ABBEY.

PUBLIC LIBRARIES

An entry in the Parish Register records the death of a girl who died within a few hours of her lover, simply of a broken heart, and Mallet's ballad, "Edwin and Emma," is founded on this incident.

So Bowes is not disappointing after all, for it has turned out in the end to be a magic place where a girl could still die for love, and where each passer-by still pauses to lay the flower of a tender thought upon her grave.

Eglistone Abbey

It is impossible to describe the charm and reposeful beauty of the old bridges over the river Tees. Abbey Bridge, Dairy Bridge, Greta Bridge—each is truly a delight; and when I stood on the Abbey Bridge, looking towards the great arch of the old window of Eglistone Abbey, which is about a mile from Barnard Castle, I was not surprised that such scenery as this had inspired the brush of Turner and the pen of Sir Walter Scott.

On nearer inspection the building itself is found to be a ruin, long used as a quarry by

the neighbouring farmers, and after that overgrown with brambles and left to decay. But the fragments which remain are now most carefully and reverently tended by Mr. Henry Edward Morritt of Rokeby Park, and it is once more remembered that brave men were laid to rest here, in a sure and certain hope of a glorious resurrection.

The inscriptions on these tombs are some of them quite perfect, and the best known is that of T. Rokeby, Bastarde, with a cross and the prayer : " Jesus for yi passions ser, have merci of yi sinful her."

Sir Walter Scott, in his poem of " Rokeby," makes this place the scene of two tragic deaths.

The abbey was erected about the end of the twelfth century, and consisted of a nave without aisles, broad transepts and a chancel ; but it is the situation rather than the building itself which lends such beauty to the spot, and the memory to carry away from here is not that of the near view of crumbling walls, but of the exquisite glimpse of an arch on rising groundwhich is seenfrom Abbey Bridge.

It is only to be expected that the banks of such a river as the Tees should be haunted by legend as well as by the ghosts of good men gone before, and whenever I strolled on the green banks and listened to the rushing water, particularly in the twilight, I looked about, with a sort of pleasant fear, for that wicked water-elf, Peg Powler.

I wanted to see her, not only because she is the Teesdale version of the Lorelei, but because she has a name so delightfully suited to the neighbourhood she haunts. Peg Powler is so undeniably the name of a real person, or thing, that no wonder the children know all about her, and that lonely urchins kept in late at school glance fearfully at every frothy swirl in the river as they run home, fearing lest the malicious water-sprite should be rising from her lair to grab them, and remembering all the time vague tales of men enticed to lonely places and dragged down beneath the brown water. The very froth on the eddies is called "Peg Powler's Suds," so she is proved beyond all doubt to be a north-country siren, who in-

dulges in a perpetual washing-day, and is endowed with a supernatural share of the north-country woman's fiery cleanliness.

Dairy Bridge -

Lovely as this spot is, where the Greta and the Tees rush over rocks to meet each other, it had been to a certain extent discounted in my mind by Turner's wonderful picture. For I only saw the hurrying water and the trees with ordinary sunshine upon them, and Turn r saw them in the light of his own great genius. He has been able to put on canvas what was there, but he has also painted something which he alone could see.

And it would indeed be a bold rambler who tried to write about this part of Teesdale, which has been painted by Turner and described by the Wizard of the North.

Close to Dairy Bridge is Mortham Tower, which is one of the old border peel towers which were used as places of defence and refuge at the time when the Scottish raiders

A. Sweeten.]

DAIRY BRIDGE.

ISLINGTON

were a constant menace to the people of the northern dales. The ancient mansion of Rokeby was situated not far away, and was burnt down by the Scots in an affray after the battle of Bannockburn, but this tower, though doubtless besieged at the same time, was too strong to be destroyed.

A writer on this part of the dales has preserved a ballad of this turbulent period, composed, as he says, by one of those nameless ballad writers whose songs defy time because they are the direct expression of the feelings of their fellow-men. It runs as follows :—

> "Lord God, is not this a pitiful case,
> The men dare not drive their goods to the fell,
> But limmer thieves drive them away,
> That fears neither heaven or hell."

It is only now and then, when we hear a poor, crudely expressed cry like that echoing down the centuries, that we realise for a moment the value and meaning of peace and safety.

As my companion and I took our way across to the Morritt Arms for luncheon, we realised what a glorious thing it was to go

about without the shadow of fear over us; a thing we had always before taken as a matter of course like air and bread and water. Even when we sat in the great old coaching inn where there was a stir and bustle of haymaking, and a girl came in flushed from the field to serve us with good country fare, we still remembered.

And all the brave things gone by, that I had sighed over during our ramble in the Yorkshire Dales, crowded together as I ate fruit tart and cheese, into a splendid background of shining armour with great banners waving and bugles blowing across a golden day: but in the foreground I saw a poor man driving a few cattle home across the fields I had just passed, and always glancing fearfully behind him.

Rokeby

When Sir Walter Scott visited the present Rokeby Hall in the June of 1809 he was impressed, as no one could fail to be, by the combination of exquisite scenery and historic

association which are to be found in this remote corner of England. As he went through the lovely woods and meadows, breathing this fine air, he was stimulated to his freshest and most spontaneous work, and the very stir and joyousness of a June morning remains for all time in the well-known song in "Rokeby"—

> "O Brignal banks are fresh and fair,
> And Greta woods are green."

It is a joy to take out a volume containing the whole poem and to trace the footsteps of this great rambler about the neighbourhood of Rokeby Hall. To do so is to add the glamour of a poet's vision to our own, and the effect so obtained of sweetness and light, of the simple and natural loveliness of God's earth, is one to experience and not to talk about.

The Hall itself is only shown in the absence of the family, but the grounds are open to visitors on Tuesdays and Fridays, and guides may be had if desired at the Morritt Arms Inn. The Hall contains a valuable library, some good tapestry, pictures

and relics from the ancient Roman camp at Greta Bridge, some remains of which are still to be found behind the inn at that place.

The present church is about a mile distant from the site of the previous one which was pulled down in the eighteenth century.

The ancient family of Rokeby had great power throughout Teesdale during the early days of the Plantagenets, and one of them at least, Ralph Rokeby, has left a document behind him which might with honour be written by any man of any period to his nephews—

"Mine own good Boyes,—You should continually in all your doings, have in remembrance that—thanks be to God—you are gentlemen, who, how they must be qualified, and in what comeliness behave themselves, read Solomon's Proverbs, the Book of Wisdome, Ecclesiastes, Ecclesiasticus, Tully's Book of Offices, Count Balthazar Castiglio of the Courtier."

I do not know much about the last named, but I am sure that it must have been suited in those days to the education of "good

boyes," and I trust they followed their uncle's final advice to "forget not this golden speech" and to avoid making a famous ancestor "groane in his grave."

In this manuscript is also contained the well-known ballad of the famous felon sow, without some mention of which no description of the neighbourhood could be complete.

The Ralph of Rokeby who is concerned in the story bore the same name, but was not the same man, as he who wrote the manuscript to "mine good boyes," and he flourished during the earlier and palmy times of this great family. In fact, he appears to have possessed a malignant sense of humour which quite unfitted him for the part of mentor to virtuous youth.

It seems likely that this quality produced the feeling in the Middle Ages which it is apt to do at present—anyway, I cannot help suspecting that all was not as agreeable as it seemed, when Ralph Rokeby offered a fine sow to the Grey Friars of Richmond.

It may even be presumed that he looked forth from Mortham's Terrace and put his

tongue in his cheek, as he watched Friar Middleton and two companions trudging gaily along until they suddenly caught sight of the gift they had come to fetch "ligganed under a tree."

For this sow showed a vim and an originality which may merit condemnation but has justly earned for her a place in history. She in a way showed the road to all females that were to come after her.

> "And there she made them such a fray
> As if they shod live untill domesday,
> They colde it never forget."

The three poor men were driven to distraction, and one of them began to read aloud to her of St. John and his Gospel, but even that had no effect whatever on this abandoned creature.

> "The Sowe she wold no Latin heare,
> But rudely rushed at the freare."

so, after a few more efforts the three men

> "Fledd away by Watling Streef,"

the ancient thoroughfare of the north, and the "felon sowe" trotted back to the pleasant banks of the Greta.

A. Sweeten.]

MEETING OF THE GRETA AND TEES.

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But Ralph of Rokeby evidently thought the joke had now gone far enough, so he allowed one Gilbert Griffin, a man of great valour, to kill "the wicked beaste."

"And to Richmond anonne
He brought her. When they sawe her come,
They sang merily *Te Deum*,
The fryers every one."

And thus ends the tale of the felon sow of Rokeby, which, curiously enough, has remained as much a part of the legendary history of the dales as King Arthur's long sleep beneath Richmond Castle in Swaledale, or the rising of the lake at Semmerwater in Wensleydale.

Raby Castle

Those who are visiting Barnard Castle should certainly make an excursion to this feudal stronghold, which remains in a wonderful state of preservation, and was a principal seat of the great Nevilles who dominated for so long this part of England. Defoe, who seems to have been another of the happy band of ramblers in these dales,

tells us in the account of his journeyings that Raby "is nothing remarkable"; but it does seem probable that this great and holy man saw it during an attack of indigestion after too much Yorkshire cheese, for it was at that time one of the finest castles in the north. It was held by the Nevilles on condition that they paid the Bishop of Durham five pounds sterling, and a stag, on each St. Cuthbert's day.

Seven hundred knights are said to have dined together in the great hall, all retainers of the family, and it was under this ancient roof that the famous "Rising of the North" was first mooted. The Nevilles paid dearly for their part in this rebellion, and lost their castle, their lands, and their great place in the county which they had held so long.

Sir Harry Vane, the next owner, entertained King Charles the First here, but he also was deprived of the estate for supporting the Parliament against Strafford. In the reign of William the Third, however, the Vanes were finally established in this place,

and the head of the family was created Lord Barnard.

Some fine portraits are to be seen in the castle, including those of Elizabeth, Cromwell, and James the Second, and there are numberless antiquities, including a galleried kitchen.

Just outside the park is Staindrop Church, which contains many Neville monuments, and is in itself well worth seeing.

Other places of interest in the neighbourhood are Wycliffe, where the "Morning Star of the Reformation" was born, and Gainford, which possesses another of the beautiful old churches which are found in such numbers in this part of the country.

But there is no end to the fresh charms of scenery and hidden little places of historic interest which the rambler may find in these northern dales, if he or she has a real love for quiet beauty, a genuine taste for rambling, and plenty of leisure in which to linger and dream.

Our holiday, however, had to end at Gainford, and as we went back to Barnard

Castle through the sunset, we said good-bye to the North Yorkshire Dales—until the next time.

For there is certain to be a next time. The rambler who has once been here must come again, because the call of the dales is as strong as the call of the East, though not so loud, and those who hear it are stimulated, even from afar, to a keener zest in living.

A clear joyousness of youth is in the blue and gold and green of the pastures and the waterfalls, and this renews in tired people the outlook of youth; the jolly certainty that life is good, and that something splendid *must* be waiting round the corner.

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